

NEWS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Farewells and welcomes
at *Applegater* newsmagazine

BY DIANA COOGLE

It is with regret that the editorial committee of the *Applegater* bids farewell to Tom Carstens, who has resigned in an effort to reduce his commitments due to health concerns.

If we had not been hit with coronavirus restrictions and the Editorial Committee could have met in person, we would have given Tom Carstens an appreciative round of applause as he bowed out.

Was there ever a more passionate supporter of the *Applegater* than Tom Carstens? As a member of the Editorial Committee for six years, Tom was never reticent to voice his opinion about how to make the *Applegater* the best possible newsmagazine for its readers, whether that meant sparring with Chris Bratt over his column, "Behind the Green Door," or asking for clarification on a sentence that didn't make sense to him. We on the Applegater Board wish him well, shower him with thanks, and assure him that we would like to see his critiques and contributions as he can, when he can. I'm hoping he'll find time for a roving reporter's article in the *Applegater* every once in a while.

It is now with pleasure that I welcome two new board members to the long and important list of *Applegater* volunteers.

Jessica Bullard, who lives in Williams, read my plea for board members in the last

issue of the *Applegater* and thought, "That's something I can do to help my community," so she applied for a position on the board and was enthusiastically voted in. Jessica brings fundraising skills (whew! Thanks, Jessica!), writing skills from a background in film and TV, and a widespread knowledge of the area from having worked most recently here as a hospice nurse. She has an impressive background. Go to the Board of Directors page on our website (applegater.org) and read her bio.

Lisa Baldwin, a former board member, has returned. We are so glad to have her back! Not only does she take great minutes at our meetings; she brings good insight and a broadening of perspectives to the board. Because she lives in the lower Applegate, she helps bring in news from that part of our readership, especially from the schools. Welcome back, Lisa!

In fact, you, reader, might want to go to the Board of Directors page on our website and reread all the bios. You'll see that you have a pretty impressive bunch of people working for your Applegater Board. You might wish you were on the board, too. Give us a ring. We'll look into the possibility.

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EDITORIAL

Say his name

We don't often write about people of color in the *Applegater*. That's not surprising. A community newspaper is a reflection of, well, its community, and the Applegate Valley is ninety-plus percent white.

But that doesn't mean, of course, we shouldn't, wouldn't, or couldn't.

There's a national conversation going on about race. We could ignore it, but don't think we should.

Some things need to be said. Silence is complicity. When others are making progress, if you're standing still, you may as well be moving backwards. We don't want to go backward.

The first step to solving a problem is admitting you have one. Admitting it is a sign of strength, not weakness. Weakness would be going on as we have.

Systemic racism exists. In the world. In our nation. In our community. In us.

Implicit bias takes work, it takes attention, to overcome.

The horror of the George Floyd strangling video in May forced a racial reckoning across the nation, but it was just the latest in a string of encounters where Blacks doing such things as jogging, sleeping, sitting in a car, watching TV, selling DVDs, and changing lanes ended up dead.

Say their names: George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Ahmaud Arbery. Philando Castile. Alton Sterling. Sandra Bland. Rayshard Brooks. Botham Jean. Trayvon Martin.

What are we going to do about it? State the obvious: Racism is wrong. We renounce bias. We welcome diversity. We want to do

whatever we can to bring people of color into the *Applegater*, whether in stories we run, from people who write them, or in any of the many roles that keep the *Applegater* going.

Think race is not relevant here? Wrong.

We live in an area that was home to untold numbers of native peoples, including the Dakubetede, Takelma, and Latgawa. They had no choice about diversification of their neighborhood and their relocation out of it.

Early on in the European history of the Applegate, a blacksmith came to town, serving the community and doing a little prospecting on the side. He contributed enough to have a mountain named after him—kind of. Except it wasn't really named after him. It was named after his color, his race, in the form of a ugly racial epithet. The man himself disappeared, became invisible, for nearly a century.

Only relatively recently, as explained in a front-page story, have we come to know a name we can say: Ben Johnson, a human being with his own story to tell. He lived a long life, seems like a good life.

It has been our loss to live so many years knowing him only as an unknown somebody after whom a mountain was named.

We've lived in the shadow of that mountain and that history—or lack of it—for a long time. It's good to come out of that shadow.

We know better. We can do better. And we will.

Applegater newsmagazine
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OPINION PIECES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinion pieces and letters to the editor represent the opinion of the author, not that of the *Applegater* or the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc. As a community-based newsmagazine, we receive diverse opinions on different topics. We honor these opinions, but object to personal attacks and reserve the right to edit accordingly. Opinion pieces and letters to the editor **must pertain to and mention the Applegate Watershed. We encourage authors to include verifiable facts to back up their arguments.**

Opinion pieces. Limited to 500 words; no images. Opinion pieces submitted by the same person will not be run consecutively. Responses to previously published opinion pieces will not be published. Must include publishable contact information (phone number and/or email address).

Letters. Limited to 200 words; must be signed, with a full street address or PO Box and phone number. Only the writer's name and hometown will be published.

Anonymous letters and opinion pieces, reprinted articles, press releases, and political campaign articles will not be published. Individual letters and opinion pieces may or may not be published. All submissions will be edited for grammar and length.

Email opinion pieces and letters to gater@applegater.org or mail to *Applegater*, Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

ADVERTISERS!

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The *Applegater* is the only newsmagazine covering the entire Applegate Valley. With a circulation of 13,000 and a readership of more than 20,000, the *Applegater* covers Jacksonville, Ruch, Applegate, Williams, Murphy, Wilderville, Wonder, Jerome Prairie, and areas of Medford and Grants Pass.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Memories of David Calahan

BY SHELLY MCMILLIN

As I write this, in late October, fall is here again in our beautiful Applegate Valley. Just when you cannot imagine more beauty, the colors emerge, and the sun is so golden. We are so blessed to live in this beautiful place.

I moved to the Applegate in 1982. So much has changed since then, and so much has not. It is still beautiful and magical.

I did lose some magic, though, on September 8. As the reports of the Ashland fires began, my dear and beloved passed away.

This was David Patrick Calahan, a man I had the good fortune to call my friend. We spent 37 years building a relationship that will never be forgotten.

If you knew David, you know he was the most organized person on the planet. I would mess with him by re-organizing his silverware. I put the knives where the spoons were and the forks where the knives were.

My favorite trick was at his wedding: I scattered pennies, nickels, dimes, and a few quarters throughout the parking area at his house, knowing that he would spend a half a day picking up \$3.37. He just could not help himself. People who

knew David know how funny this is, and we will always laugh about it.

David taught me more than any other person in this lifetime, and at my age I am certain about that. He had many attributes; some were super admirable, and some were not (true for all of us). But David was absolutely a man of his word. If he said he'd be there at 10 am, he was. Always.

I miss David every day, and I reckon I always will. He is everywhere I look. He helped me put the chimney right because it was not right, according to David. He helped move me in the pouring rain because he said he would. He installed solar in the barn because he said I had great sun exposure. We went on great "scores" from the Nickel long before Craig's List and Jo's List were even around. He rebuilt our spring when I was recovering from knee surgery, when working in wet and muddy conditions was not an option for me.

The list goes on and on and on....

So, yes, I will miss him every single day, and I thank him for teaching me about respect. I respect you, my brother, forever.

—Shelly McMillin

Double your money!

Donations to the *Applegater* made by December 31 will be doubled by NewsMatch, a nonprofit news organization fund drive the *Applegater* qualified for for the first time this year. Donate online at applegater.org, or mail a check to the *Applegater*, PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

Keep your news in your newspaper coming!
There's never been a better time to give.