

Welcome to new Applegater board member, Mike Schneider

The *Applegater* Board of Directors is pleased to welcome its newest member, Mike Schneider.

Mike, who lives with his wife, Liv, on North Applegate Road, has brought a passel of experience and talent to our board. As principal of his own management consulting firm, MAS Associates, he guided and advised companies seeking to maximize returns on their consumer databases. Prior to that, he served as president and CEO of Affinity Group (now called Good Sam Enterprises, Inc.), a \$500-million consumer services company then based in Ventura, California (now in Illinois).

Besides this valuable business experience, Mike brings practical knowledge from work in both law and journalism and from having served on numerous boards.

In his interview for the position with the *Applegater*, Mike emphasized how much he and his family, all of whom read the *Applegater*, love the Applegate. They feel fortunate to be here. Mike thinks the *Applegater* helps people, and he said he would like to help the paper do that.

Though he still makes periodic trips to California, his life is increasingly Applegate-focused.

The interviewing committee said of him, "We were impressed by Mike's friendly, humble personality. His responses were forthcoming, thoughtful, and responsive to our inquiries. He seemed intelligent, good-humored, gregarious, and well-meaning."

Sounds like a good fit for the *Applegater*! Welcome, Mike.

The *Applegater*
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Spotlighting Applegate Valley's diversity: forging a new vision

BY BARBARA SUMMERHAWK

The initial Zoom meeting of the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council's (APWC) Cultural Committee brought together multicultural representatives from across the valley and beyond to create a more visible presence of the first people on the land and the various communities who later had claims on and settled in the Applegate. According to committee organizer and longtime valley resident, Janis Mohr-Tipton, the purpose of the Applegate Cultural Committee is "to create a forum for stakeholders that will help us develop a process to ensure authentic interpretive and educational materials that clearly represent the history and culture of all early peoples of the Applegate Valley and beyond: Tribal, Black, Chinese, Hawaiian, and White inhabitants."

The committee's first project will be in the Applegate watershed. Janis hopes it will have a "rippling-out" benefit to a much larger region.

The "virtual" table seated 23 participants with a wide range of talent, experience, enthusiasm, and identities. They represented the Agnes Pilgrim Legacy Fund, Oregon Black Pioneers, Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Cow Creek Tribe of Umpqua, McKee Bridge Historical Society, community supporters, multigenerational settlers, and staff and board members of APWC. The Bureau of Land Management, Woodland Charter School, Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS), and the "Upriver to Morning" Environmental and Cultural Education Program represented the environmental and cultural education field.

The focus of this first meeting, besides introducing the purpose and the interested parties, was to build interest in two projects proposed at Cantrall Buckley Park. The first project is to honor Grandmother Agnes Taowhywee (Morning Star) Baker Pilgrim, Takelma Indian Elder of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, who passed away last year. The second is to create a cultural demonstration area at the park. Developing this area will help us brainstorm future projects about the valley's cultural heritage and how to present it.

First out of the post-pandemic gate will be Takelma Grandmother's Memorial Site at Cantrall Buckley Park, led by Jackson County Parks manager, Steve Lambert. Grandmother Agnes was revered as a treasure by her people and by many communities, local to international. The website of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers quotes her: "We grandmothers have come from far and wide to speak the knowledge we hold inside. In many languages we have been told it is time to make the right changes for our families, for the lands we love. We can be the voice for the voiceless. We are at the threshold. We are going to see change."

The APWC will work with the cultural committee participants and volunteers to plan and restore native plant species around the memorial area and add seating, a guided nature trail, and interpretive signage describing our



The planned Takelma Grandmother's Memorial Site at Cantrall Buckley Park will honor Agnes Baker Pilgrim, who passed away in 2020.



Janis Mohr-Tipton at the future memorial site for Agnes Baker Pilgrim.
Photo: Jonathan, Jackson County Parks.

■ APPLAGATE LODGE

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relieved to have now given that job to a wedding coordinator.

One day, unexpectedly, Gordon Ramsay, from the reality TV show *Hotel Hell*, called, wanting to do an episode at the lodge. "The show brought us a lot of curiosity and a lot of publicity," Joanna says, "good or bad. At least, it brought the boys together. And Gordon Ramsay treated me like a queen," she adds. The show aired on August 4, 2014.

"It's been a journey," Joanna says, reminiscing. "Sometimes I would call this a 'cursed effin' place,' and in the next moment I knew I loved it. I'm honored to have been a steward of this property. All the family feel that way. We put our hearts and souls into it. It's the saddest thing to let it go."

Nonetheless, she says, "It's time to see if we can accomplish something else in the time we have left. I'm 71. If not now, when?"

When the lodge sells, she will buy a motor home and travel.

But until then, Joanna and her family are still around. They still give 50 entrees a week to the Compassion Highway Project in Medford, a service Dusty started last



The front entrance of the lodge.
Photo: Diana Coogle.

March. They have been repainting and repairing while the restaurant is closed for the pandemic.

Joanna recognizes the specialness of the lodge to the Applegate. She intends to see that it stays special to the community she loves and has served for 29 years.

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■ PARAGLIDING

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words, to be eligible to participate in the event, pilots must show proof of COVID vaccination at least 10 days prior to the sign-in date or provide documentation of a negative COVID test within 72 hours of signing in. Pilots who don't comply with these protocols will be barred from competing.



Competitors float over Woodrat Mountain during a paragliding event.
Photo: Dan Wells.

While we understand this will hinder some from participating, it is the appropriate step in assuring public safety. We hope this assurance will offer peace of mind to local businesses that will certainly see an increase in patrons during the event week. Please feel free to contact the organizer for more information by email at AO-organizer@RVHPA.org.

Additionally, we are excited to announce that this year's event will be hosted by Wells Land Vineyard. The team at Wells Land is well versed in coordinating and providing events from concerts to weddings. Check out Wells Land Vineyard on Facebook and learn more about this local gem.

While the event is subject to cancellation, we are really looking forward to sharing this amazing sport with you. Look for the Applegate sky to be filled with gliders this June 19-26.

Terri Stewart, President
Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and
Paragliding Association
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Native American heritage and flora surrounding the area.

The second project will use a flat area of the park for a visual exhibit, future storytelling events, and presentations on cultural icons and historical events, with room for informative and recreational interactive activities.

At the committee meeting, Zachary Stocks, executive director of Oregon Black Pioneers (Oregon's Black historical society), told the story of Ben Johnson and the renaming of Negro Ben Mountain. Because the park sits at the foot of Ben Johnson Mountain, it is the perfect setting for a cultural area and exhibit telling the story of this pioneer. (You can also read about Ben Johnson in a front-page story by Suzie Savoie in the winter 2020 issue of the *Applegater*.)

Participants at the inaugural meeting were excited to discuss ideas about using stationary and portable traveling exhibits for telling authentic history and stories. They discussed funding possibilities and opportunities for community members to engage in and contribute toward these cultural resources. They also suggested partnering with a number of other history-oriented groups to create a cultural trail throughout the Applegate watershed and beyond.

The APWC is excited to support this committee's work by including biocultural information on signage and in educational materials of our Outdoor Education Program.

All at this inaugural meeting felt the importance of the work of rediscovering and celebrating all our diverse roots. If you are interested in working with the APWC Cultural Committee or would like more information, contact Janis Mohr-Tipton at janis.agapark@gmail.com or applegatepartnership.org.

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