

ASK THE GATER

Where are the burned logs coming from?

BY LISA BALDWIN

Truckloads of burned logs roll through the Lower Applegate. Where are they coming from?

Lower Applegate resident Kate Hoffman posed this issue's *Ask The Gater* question when she wondered about the numerous log trucks crossing the Applegate Bridge going toward Grants Pass on Highway 199 (and some heading down Riverbanks Road), fully loaded with charred timber. She wasn't aware of any salvage logging being done yet in the Slater Fire burn area, and she wanted to know where all these burned logs were coming from.

Scott Blower, Wild Rivers District Ranger (Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest), confirmed that (as of late April) no fire salvage timber sales have been let for bids yet in the Slater/Devil fire burn area, but there are burned logs being taken out of the Slater burn and hauled to the Swanson mill in Glendale. These are likely the trucks spotted in the Lower Applegate.

Last September, when the Slater Fire was still burning, US Forest Service (USFS) and Pacific Power personnel worked together to cut trees posing a hazard to firefighters and to safeguard the

electrical power transmission line that runs through the area. Five million board feet of timber were cut and decked as part of the firefight. That wood, 48 decks, from the Slater Burned Area Emergency Response, was bought by the Swanson Group in February for \$2.3 million. Blower believes most, if not all, of that timber is going to the Swanson operation in Glendale.

"All of the Slater footprint is still closed to the public," Blower said in late April, but the Slater Fire Safe Re-entry Project has USFS actively working to get the area reopened. Following the NEPA analysis, the Safe Re-entry Project decision was signed by Blower on April 9, allowing timber sales to be put together to treat the burned area south of Takilma, west of Sucker Creek, and east of Hwy 199. The project encompasses approximately 146 miles and 4,194 roadside acres. The first sale was planned to open for bids in mid-May. A top priority is repairing the roadway and removing dangerous fire-weakened trees along the Happy Camp/Grayback Road, work that must be done before the area will be fully open to the public.

Lisa Baldwin • leb.97527@gmail.com

Changes in the works at riverside properties

BY MICHAEL SCHNEIDER

Two well-known Applegate Valley businesses are looking at changes to each of their popular establishments.

In the first, the iconic Red Lily Vineyards is for sale. According to an electronic offering memorandum by Pegasus Investments, the Los Angeles-based real estate firm handling the sale, the 255 acres of the vineyard house a winery, a tasting room, a horse barn, a hay barn, a workshop, a 4,470-square-foot home, and a 1,700-square-foot guest house.

The vineyard is approximately 18 acres, with additional grape-growing possibilities on the entire property, which has nearly a mile of frontage along the Applegate River. According to Pegasus, the existing vineyards could be increased by an additional 82 acres, for a total vineyard yield of up to 15,000 cases of wine annually.

Red Lily was purchased by the current owners in 2006 and has undergone a number of renovations in the subsequent years, such as installation of a new irrigation infrastructure and construction of a new winery and tasting room. The winery has won several awards since the renovations were completed, including Best Winery by *Southern Oregon Magazine*, and Double Platinum and Platinum awards in the Northwest Wine Competition.

The asking price is \$8,850,000.

The second business undergoing change is the Applegate River Golf Club, on New Hope Road in Grants Pass, which has applied to Josephine County for permission to build an RV park alongside the golf course. The proposed 25-space RV park would be built on an adjacent piece of land, owned by Pat Bernard, whose family owns the golf course. The company would have to comply with a number of county requirements, including building at a distance of at least 50 feet from the river, enclosing the area with a fence, and limiting occupants to a maximum stay of



Red Lily is four miles west of Ruch on Highway 238. Photo: Michael Schneider.



Applegate River Golf Club is along the Applegate River at 7350 New Hope Road in Josephine County. Photo: Michael Schneider.

30 days every six months. As of press time, the process was still undergoing the review and appeal process. Bernard submitted the original application in mid-2019 and received a conditional use permit (CUP) later that year.

Almost immediately after the CUP was approved, a group of neighbors filed an appeal, and a public hearing was held in May 2020. Some residents voiced their support for the proposal; others voiced objections. Two months later, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners denied the appeal, but subsequently the group opposing the park filed another appeal with the state Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). On March 19 this year, LUBA denied the project opponents' appeal and remanded the matter to the county, where the application presently resides.

Michael Schneider
mschneider@masassociatesinc.com

••• BIZBITS •••

Awen Winecraft's Tasting Room

(dubbed the Inspiration Station) opened in February at the McCully House in Jacksonville, on the corner of 5th and California, across from their friends at Quady North. With ample heated outdoor seating and indoor seating in a room with hand-crafted woodwork, customers have good spaces for enjoying the laid-back "rock and roll" vibe.

Co-owners and winemakers, Sean Hopkins and Tom Homewood, began making wine together in 2006. Starting in California with relatively large lots (eight-plus tons in 2007), Sean continued learning his craft with the local varietals of southern Oregon, specifically the Rhone, Italian, and Spanish varietals that grow so well in this area. In due time, Sean and Tom decided to go pro.

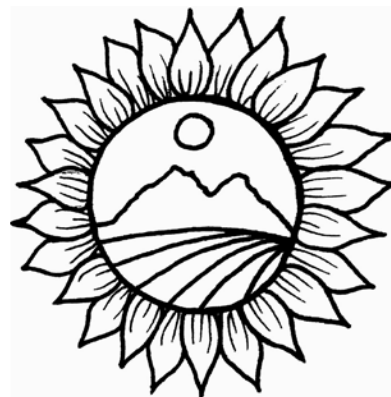
Fast forward to 2016, and Awen Winecraft was born. Taking its name from the Welsh word and Celtic rune meaning the spark of creativity or the source of divine inspiration, and "winecraft" from their partners at Barrel 42, a winery in Medford, Awen Winecraft's owners decided to focus on balance in winemaking and to work within the limits of what the local fruit can provide. Working with master growers, Awen could be selective with what they made and use some "off the beaten path" varietals, such as Grenache Blanc, Vermentino, and Dolcetto, along with some more popular varietals in the area, Tempranillo and Viognier. Awen always works to achieve balance.

Awen has won numerous awards both inside and outside of Oregon. The 2017 Viognier won best of show at the Oregon Wine Experience and a double-gold medal at the *San Francisco Chronicle* Wine Competition. The 2018 Albariño was a reserve champion, the 2017 Sangiovese a multi-gold medal winner, and many Grenache Blancs have won best of show. "We hope you'll find something that you will love!" Sean says.

Awen Winecraft: 240 E California Street, Jacksonville

Open 3-9 pm Wednesday through Friday; noon to 9 pm Saturday; noon to 6 pm Sunday. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Contact: Sean Hopkins, 541-702-2164, info@awenwinecraft.com
awenwinecraft.com, Instagram.com/awenwinecraft.



The Red Buttes Farm logo was created by Leigh Normandin.

Red Buttes Farm owner, Patrick Homa, recently took over operations on what was formerly known as Sun Spirit Farm, just outside of Murphy. "Red Buttes Farm (RBF) grows produce on 15 acres in three different locations in the Applegate Valley," Patrick said. "We currently go to the Grants Pass Farmer's Market and the Thursday Medford Market and will be participating in the new Applegate Evening Market in Ruch as well. You can also find our produce at Shop'n Kart in Ashland and Cartwright's in Medford." The farm may have familiar faces to some of you, as Patrick managed Barking Moon Farm for the past three plus years, and Kyra, who, Patrick says, "was the heart and soul of Sun Spirit," has joined the team.

"Since we grow just about everything, subscribing to a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is an excellent way to get the freshest, highest-vibe veggies," Patrick says. "Things are in full swing! We have about 10,000 brassicas in the ground, a house full of zucchinis, and carrots sizing up. Spoiler alert: The first CSA box will contain carrots, a lettuce mix, zucchinis, kale, spring Walla Walla onions, and much more!"

Deliveries will begin the third week in May and end the second week in October for a total of 20 weekly boxes. Buyers can pick up boxes at four locations: the farm, at 10241 Williams Highway, Murphy; the farmers market in Medford on Thursday; the Grants Pass Market on Saturday; and the Applegate Evening Market in Ruch on Wednesday. Price: \$600 (deal!) at sign-up or \$350 at sign up and an additional \$300 by July 1. Each box is valued at a minimum of \$35 (\$700 value total). If you are interested or have any questions, email Patrick at redbuttesfarm@gmail.com or call him at 608-632-4042. He hopes to be your farmer this season!

Jeanette LeTourneau • jeanette@applegater.org

BizBits highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone. Email gater@applegater.org.

Free anti-overdose drugs distributed

Free distribution of life-saving overdose medication and HIV tests is set for 10:30 am to 1:30 pm Sunday, June 6, at the Sugarloaf Center, 206 Tetherow Road, in Williams. Park in the parking lot and take a short walk to the center, which is at the end of the gated driveway.

Volunteers from the nonprofit group Rogue Harm Reduction will offer free doses of naloxone to take home, along with instructions for use. They'll also give out free fentanyl test strips, take-home HIV tests, and condoms.

Free overdose response training takes about 20 minutes.

Rogue Harm Reduction, a volunteer-run, nonprofit health collective, promotes community wellness and harm reduction strategies in response to substance use disorders and other community health concerns. The events are held the first Sunday of each month.

For more information, email rogueharmreduction@gmail.com.