

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The decent thing to do

BY LIZA CROSSE

I'm writing to encourage unvaccinated *Applegater* readers to get a COVID-19 shot as soon as possible. When you get a vaccination, you are proving that you care about your family and your community, as well as yourself. It's just the decent thing to do. As of July 29, only 55 percent of Jackson County residents have been vaccinated, and that's bad for all of us.

This is not about politics, folks. As with any medical decision, it's about weighing risks, and the choice is clear. The Centers for Disease Control data from July 27 showed that 97 percent of people being hospitalized with COVID-19 are unvaccinated. People who are vaccinated are rarely getting sick.

It's clear that the risk of complications from vaccinations is extremely low. Serious effects from the vaccines are very rare. My husband and I both had mildly tender arms for a couple of days. Our vaccinations (Pfizer and Moderna) were easier than a flu shot. Unless you have a condition that affects your ability to have a shot, you can be reassured that the vaccines are very safe.

As of this writing (early August), in Jackson County the rate of infection has jumped 297 percent in two weeks. With the Delta variant sickening so many people now, the risk of not being vaccinated is great, and the long-term impacts from having the disease are potentially dreadful.

So please, neighbors, take care of yourselves, your loved ones, and all the rest of us by getting vaccinated immediately!

Liza Crosse, Applegate

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Deus ex vaccine

BY MARGARET DELLA SANTINA

This summer, my family and I climbed the steps to our seats in the ancient amphitheater at Epidaurus, Greece, to watch *Orestes*, the tragic play written by Euripides in 408 BC. (We read the *Gater* while we waited; photo on back page.) Sitting on the well-worn limestone tiers transported us back nearly 2,500 years—except the actors weren't wearing masks, as they did in ancient Greece; the audience was.

Traveling to Greece was surprisingly easy. We completed Greek travel forms, presented vaccination cards, uploaded negative test results. While we were in Greece, the country's vaccination rate climbed steadily. People masked up when entering indoor spaces or crowded public places. Greece, where tourism is vital to the economy, welcomed tourists back.

None of this would have been possible without the COVID-19 vaccine.

With the spread of the Delta variant, it's too late to stop new waves of the virus from killing unthinkable numbers of unvaccinated people. But vaccination is still our best bet. In ancient Greek tragedies when humans acted against their own best interests, the gods swooped down to sort things out. Can we hope for the same?

Thank you for encouraging *Applegater* readers to get vaccinated, for the greater good of our community.

Margaret della Santina, perrowm@sou.edu

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'Keep working for Mother Nature'

BY CHANT THOMAS

As the recipient of the third annual Chris Bratt Conservation Award, I want to thank the Applegate Neighborhood Network (ANN) for honoring my local conservation work. I appreciate the recognition, and I value the contributions of ANN board and members to support conservation of our precious forests, streams, wetlands, and wildlands.

Let's keep working for Mother Nature's divine manifestations here in our beloved Applegate!

Chant Thomas
Little Applegate

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.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Intent on a bigger tent

BY BERT ETLING

We recently made some small but, we feel, meaningful changes to the *Applegater* mission statement. Only about a dozen words are different from what you previously saw each week in the first column on page five.

It's still just two sentences. The first says what we will do. The second goes into how we'll do it and what impact that will have.

We took out "enrich our lives" from the end of the first sentence because it seemed redundant, and we added that one of our goals is specifically to represent *all* of the Applegate—meaning not just geographically, but also in all the other axes of diversity, including economic, cultural, ethnicity, and gender.

We also changed "we can work together to maintain the quality of life" to "work together to enhance the quality of life." Why not make things better?

Finally, the former mission statement said it was the quality of life "that drew us to the Applegate." That assumed we all moved here, leaving out natives of all types, so we changed that line too.

Here is the revised mission statement: "The goal of the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., is to provide the many communities of the Applegate watershed with a communication vehicle, the *Applegater*, that will provide educational information, increase community networking, and represent all the area's diverse communities. Through honest, constructive, relevant, and entertaining reports on a wide variety of subjects and viewpoints, including our natural resources, historical and current events, and community news, we can work together to enhance the quality of life we have in the Applegate and continue to make a difference in our valley."

We're here to serve *your* needs. Let us know what you want more of, what you want less of, and what you're not seeing at all that you would like to see. Email me at bert@applegater.org, or call 541-631-1313.

On board with that?

There's another way you help shape the *Applegater*: Volunteer to serve on our board. We currently have a fine six-member team, but we feel in need of at least one more board member.

Are you qualified? Here's what our bylaws call for in a board member: "Current or past residents of the Applegate watershed, or whose place of employment is within the Applegate watershed, who show an interest in the local and regional concerns of our citizens and are willing to attend our meetings and contribute to developing a plan that will allow this newspaper to continue being published."

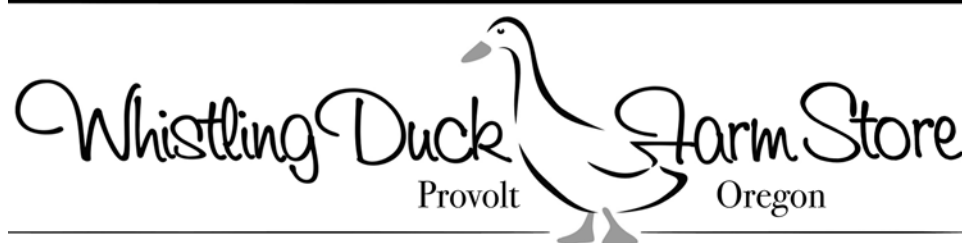
We meet monthly. We ask you to commit to at least two years of service and to work in some capacity to keep the *Applegater* thriving: fundraising (we would love a fundraising chair!), writing, social media—if you have a talent, we could probably use it.

We have a step-by-step process for voting new members onto the board. Contact Chair Diana Coogle (diana@applegater.org) for more information, or just jump in and say right now, "I'm interested. Let's get started."

We think we have a wonderful, fulfilling mission that allows us to make a difference in our community. Please join us in making that mission a reality.

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Located at 12800 Williams Hwy. in the Applegate Valley on the 238 Hwy. between the Provolt Store & Water Gap Rd.



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