

Applegater

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Celebrating
~27~
Years

A Christmas tree straight out of the woods

BY DIANA COOGLE

One of the special wonders of living in the Applegate is to be able to go into the woods and cut your own Christmas tree. There's nothing like bundling up against the cold and walking through the woods, hunting for, then finding, the perfect tree, and singing "Deck the Halls" as you shoulder it, prominently tagged with your permit, back to the truck. It's especially magical with children in tow.

It would be fun if you had to have a sled to haul the tree out of the forest over the snow—or, as the US Forest Service website suggests, to ski through the woods to find your tree, but probably you won't need either skis or a sled unless we're lucky enough to have snow in the mountains before Christmas.

Get a permit

To cut your own Christmas tree, all you need is a permit from the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Service, a saw (a bow makes less noise than a chain saw), and a map of places where you are allowed to cut. In the Applegate,

limbs aren't as tight as they are on grown-for-Christmas-tree trees. They are more airy, so that ornaments dangle in open spaces instead of nestling into a mass of branches. Your permit allows you your choice of species. Fir is best—Douglas, noble, or Shasta red. Cedar looks good, but the ornaments tend to slide off the ends of the branches. A few people might even choose pine.

You are allowed to cut a Christmas tree on any green space on the forest service's Christmas tree map. You are not allowed to cut on private property, on federally managed campgrounds, or on federally protected property, such as a National Monument, Wild and Scenic River corridor, Research Natural Area, or Wilderness Area. But you don't have to remember all those "don'ts." You just have to cut within the green areas on the map.

Remember 12

The number to remember is 12. Your tree must not be taller than 12 feet—



Christmas tree hunting in the wild can lead to a perfect find.
Photo: Diana Coogle.



A decorated "wild" Christmas tree in Diana Coogle's house.
Photo: Diana Coogle.



Special ornaments personalize anyone's Christmas tree.
Photo: Diana Coogle.

the map and the permit are available at Ruch Country Store (on the plaza) and at Ruch Hardware (on Upper Applegate Road across from Ruch School). Or you can go online at recreation.gov to get a map and a permit. Permits cost \$5.00 per tree.

Wild Christmas trees have a different look from the domesticated kind. The

but that's a mighty high ceiling if you want a tree taller than that. You are only allowed to cut a tree that is within 12 feet of another tree. You must cut so the stump is no taller than 12 inches.

But 200 and 300 are good numbers to remember too: don't cut
See CHRISTMAS TREE, page 17.

Keep the Applegater coming

Community news, free for all—that's what the *Applegater* delivers to you four times a year. Now we ask for you to donate to keep news of the Applegate Valley coming to you and your neighbors.

It's a great time to give. Until the end of the year, your donation will be doubled, thanks to our participation in the NewsMatch program through the Institute for Nonprofit News.

Historically, we've been able to supplement your donations with fundraising proceeds, but we've been unable to hold an event because of COVID-19—making your donation all the more important now.

The *Applegater*, the only communication source for the entire Applegate, is mailed free of charge to the mailbox of every resident and business in the Applegate.

To keep that going, please send your check, made out to the *Applegater*, to PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530. (We've included a handy, pre-addressed envelope in mailed copies of this edition.) Or go to applegater.org and look for the yellow "Donate" button on our home page (or click on the "Support the Gater" link at the bottom of the list in the left-hand column).

However you give, please do it by December 31. That will go a long way toward keeping the Gater coming throughout 2022.
Thank you!

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Grow Youth: Cutting a foundation for outdoor education

BY NATHAN GEHRES

Local Applegate students will soon receive an education in riparian restoration and monitoring techniques, through practical experience, as they assist the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC) and Jackson County Parks Department in rehabilitating the west bank of the Applegate River in Cantrall Buckley Park. Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS), the Carpenter Foundation, and Schwemm Family Foundation, through a program dubbed "Grow Youth," have formed a partnership to create an outdoor laboratory for students that will also benefit the landscape, the watershed, and local wildlife.

In mid-October the APWC staff began preparing for the Grow Youth program at Cantrall Buckley Park by removing masses of blackberries along the riverbank. This work has uncovered a plethora of other opportunities: to clean

up trash; mulch dead trees and limbs; identify, label, measure, and catalog existing plants; plant new flora; and even create a Beaver Food Bank along the stream with willows.

"We have been working with Ryan King, the ROCS Vice Principal, and with Hannah Borgerson, the second-year Americorps Rural Schools Coordinator," says Janelle Dunlevy, APWC Executive Director. "We believe this site has amazing opportunities as an outdoor laboratory for local Applegate students and students from nearby Grants Pass and Medford areas."

The students of ROCS will start the project and will also run it again in the future. The hope is that each graduating ROCS class will hand off the responsibility and ownership of the project to the subsequent classes and that, by sharing this work with other local schools, the students will have a wider range of monitoring

See GROW YOUTH, page 3.

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