

NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

Exciting year for A Greater Applegate

BY SETH KAPLAN



A recent meeting of the Food and Farm group.

This is shaping up to be an exciting year for A Greater Applegate (AGA) as we move into phase two of our four-phase Applegate Valley Vision process! In phase 1, we listened to learn about ways to build and sustain community in the Applegate. Now we are prioritizing what we've learned and building our collective capacity to implement it. Phase three is implementation, and then we will get to celebrate and reflect.

Phase two began with the prioritization and capacity-building sessions for business and nonprofit networks as described in the last issue of the *Applegater*. In January, we focused on two initiatives: the local Food and Farm system and Destination Applegate. Additional sessions are planned in February for fire resiliency, forest restoration, and outdoor recreation. We'll add new prioritizing and capacity-building sessions throughout the year.

The Food and Farm priority session at Vista222 benefitted from the participation of two dozen locals and of Jill Rees, associate director of Oregon's USDA Rural Development, which is supported by Business Oregon, USDA, and the Ford Family Foundation. In partnership with the Rogue Valley Food System Network, AGA is seeking to strengthen the local food system by helping create, sustain, and support more food-related businesses. This includes supporting our three farmers markets, creating shared equipment and resource systems, producing an Applegate Valley food resource guide, and creating worker-accessible housing, among other proposed projects. Notes from this and other meetings will appear on the Community Connections page at agreaterapplegate.org.

Destination Applegate is a local economic strategy to encourage visitors to spend more time and money here. This strategy is supported by Business Oregon, the Reser Family Foundation, Travel Southern Oregon, the Ford Family Foundation, and USDA Rural Development. About 120,000 visitors come to the Applegate every year to appreciate our wine, lavender, and outdoor recreation, among other pleasures; however, their dollars are spent on food and lodging in neighboring cities. By encouraging visitors to spend the night in the Applegate, we can increase dollars spent across our local economy.

Throughout our listening sessions, people made it clear that they don't want hotels. But many Applegaters earn income from short-term rentals. As a first step, AGA is seeking to identify the short-term rentals already in our area and learn

more about their success and needs. We believe that existing short-term rentals can accommodate more than 300 visitors, making it easier to encourage overnight stays for weddings, large family gatherings, and events like Uncorked, Applegate Open, and Lavender Trails.

Both short-term and long-term rentals are a tremendous need in the Applegate Valley, and it is essential that we balance these needs as we begin to implement the emerging Applegate Valley Vision. Long-term rentals will be addressed in several community action teams, including Food & Farm and Health & Human Services. The issue is likely to emerge in other places as well.

If you are interested in learning more about the Applegate Valley Vision, please contact us (see agreaterapplegate.org for contact information) to receive our bi-weekly bulletin and consider joining our leadership via the Community Action Teams or as a board member.

AGA receives support for Applegate Valley businesses

Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency, awarded grants to 33 organizations that provide technical assistance to historically underserved and under-resourced small businesses across Oregon. A Greater Applegate was awarded \$150,000 over an 18-month period to support rural small businesses through the Applegate Valley Business Network.

This new funding will enable AGA to support local businesses with marketing support, website design, financial management, permitting and land-use consulting, among other assistance. AGA has also engaged a local consultant to support entrepreneurs interested in starting new businesses. Business start-up assistance will be provided in English and Spanish. In addition, a partnership with the Jackson County Small Business Development Center offers online business classes to Applegate Valley residents.

AGA is requiring everyone participating in this technical-assistance program to join the Applegate Valley Business Network to help us better track outcomes. Annual membership is \$50, and scholarships are available. No one will be denied services for lack of funds. If you are a small-business owner or have a business startup idea and would like to join our Business Network, or if you are interested in more information about the technical assistance program, reach out to ashley@agreaterapplegate.org.

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Peter Britt's Applegate clientele

BY LAURA AHEARN

Supported by a Momentum Grant awarded by A Greater Applegate (AGA), McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) is increasing the sophistication and reach of its exhibits. In April MBHS will present a display, at the Jacksonville Library, of Applegate portraits and photography by Peter Britt. We are lucky that this prolific photographer was a pack rat, but he was a terrible notetaker and record keeper!

Thousands of images captured by Peter Britt survive. He often made more copies than the client wanted to buy; those extra originals may be tucked away in the Southern Oregon Historical Society library. The Hannon Library at Southern Oregon (University) Library has an extensive collection; many high-resolution computerized files were created from the original glass negative plates and are available online. Family members may still have an original portrait of ancestors handed down over the past 150 years. More often, what we find are fuzzy, secondhand copies of copies, maybe minimized to post on social media.

So far MBHS has identified more than 100 Britt images that reflect Applegate residents or scenes. This search has been challenging because the subjects have almost never been described accurately, if at all! Maybe Britt noted who paid for the work, but not the person actually photographed. Or, an individual donating a photo offered a best guess about the subject but got things quite wrong.

Take, for example, "Mrs. William Ray (mother) with purse." Well, William Ray's wife was Mary Louisa Zelmere (he was her second husband; she wisely divorced the first). Louisa's mother was Mary Terrier who married French immigrant Joseph Zelmere at an exceptionally young age, 11 or 13 years. Mary had four subsequent husbands: Marquis LaFayette Enyart (uncle of Louisa's first husband), William Billups, Benjamin Smith, and John Buckley. Mary Buckley died in 1917 and was buried at Logtown Cemetery.

What is the earliest Britt photograph of an Applegate-related person? Perhaps Hattie Thompson, daughter of the namesake of Thompson Creek. Her father died in 1856 and her mother Permelia married Judge Legrande J.C. Duncan, who built a home (today's Judge Hanna B&B) across the street from Britt's residence and studio. Hattie simply had to sashay across 1st Street in her antebellum-style hooped skirt and tight corset to sit for a portrait.

Which Applegater was most photographed? Probably Chester Kubli, beloved first-born of Henry and Maud (Cameron) Kubli. His proud parents took him for portraits at least three times as an infant and toddler.

Some took the trip to Britt's studio less seriously than others. Why did Samuel Phillips, the first "permanent" settler of Buncom, wear a rooster hat?

There is nothing quite like holding an original Britt print, knowing it was produced by the master. The clarity and detail are stunning. You can virtually feel the soft nap of Phoebe Geary's sateen dress in the portrait taken just months before her death, from smallpox, in 1873.

Please take a look at our April exhibit and sign the visitors log—leave a question or observation. You just might see something in these photographs that we've missed, a clue that will unlock more information about Peter Britt's Applegate clientele.

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Mrs. William Ray (mother) with purse, 1886.



Miss Hattie Thompson in the 1860s.



Chester Cameron Kubli in 1889, 1893, and 1894.

All photos in this article are from SOU Hannon Library Special Collections.