

OPINION

Gratitude

BY SANDY OLKEN

The famous quote by Benjamin Franklin, “We will not appreciate water until the well runs dry,” is as antiquated as its famous writer. Instead, a new paradigm of thought and action is being birthed by all who express our gratitude for water. Water, the most basic necessity for the continuation of life, is a gift to be cherished.

On May 29 there was a water blessing ceremony on Mt. Ashland, as well as in many other places around the world. People gathered to unite their voices, speaking and singing their gratitude for the water. We truly are immensely grateful for the rains that have refilled our reservoirs and replenished our rivers.

It is no small thing to turn on the faucet and have water come out. Or to turn on the irrigation and have the water necessary to keep our crops and livestock alive. The practice of receiving with reverence all that we have and need to take care of our children—our everything—is a worthy endeavor.

Masaru Emoto is known for his photography of water molecules. His book, *Love Thyself*, shows the change in the structure of water depending on what words were spoken at the time the photographs were taken. Water is alive, and all life is connected. Our gratitude is a kind of food for the water.

We can improve our lives simply by remembering to express our gratitude to the water—when we drink it, when we bathe in it, whenever we enjoy it, in all the ways we do. Grandma Aggie, our beloved Takelma elder, may she rest in peace, spent her lifetime teaching us about the importance of expressing our gratitude and love for the water.

I try to remember every time I cross the Applegate bridge in Applegate to breathe love and gratitude into our beautiful Applegate River. I try to remember to breathe into my heart a quiet “thank you” when I drink the sacred elixir of life.

Our gratitude for life and water has a tremendous effect on our world. The more hearts and voices that join together in a song of praise, the happier and healthier our world will be.

If you’d like to add your voice to the communal expression of gratitude but don’t know how, I’ll share this simple example: “Beautiful, holy, and sacred water, thank you for this life.”

The Williams Community Forest Project is actively involved in the protection of water. Our forests and our water are interdependent.

In my humble opinion, gratitude is the key to happiness.

Sandy Olken
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Anyone know Cosmo the Crow?

A talking crow has gone missing, and I’m writing with the hope that someone knows what happened to him. I’m a reporter writing a story about Cosmo the Crow, who was last seen at 2:18 pm December 18, 2021.

Cosmo lived on Dreamhill Drive (in the Provolt-Williams area) and made national news when he flew into a Grants Pass school and began “playing with” and “talking” to children. But Cosmo could also be a nuisance, swooping at people, pecking at dogs, and, in a few instances, drawing blood. He was habituated to not be afraid of humans—which is why if Cosmo was killed, it wasn’t a crime. Oregon State Police advised concerned neighbors they could shoot the bird.

It’s possible someone encountered a crow acting aggressively and took action. Perhaps someone accidentally hit a crow with a car. Or maybe someone found a bird that appeared to say a few words and kept him as a pet.

If you encountered a strange crow, please reach out by email to cosmocrowtips@gmail.com or sswindler@oregonian.com. Any tips or leads are appreciated. If you killed Cosmo but don’t want to share your name, you can reach out anonymously. I’m only hoping to provide closure to a small neighborhood mystery.

Samantha Swindler
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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.

NEWS FROM THE
CHAIR OF THE BOARDFarewell and hello again
to *Applegater* editors

BY DIANA COOGLE

It is with deep regret that I announce the resignation of our editor, Bert Etling.

Bert took over the editorship of the *Applegater* in 2020, when Barbara Holiday, editor since 2013, turned to other matters in her life.

Bert has been important to the *Applegater* in many ways, but without doubt the best thing he did for us was to bring us into membership of the Independent News Network, with its NewsMatch program, which has been so successful in putting us on more solid financial footing. With NewsMatch doubling every donation that comes in between November 1 and December 31, we have been able to breathe between issues at last, confident that our coffers held enough for the next edition.

The news of Bert’s resignation comes with a bright side too: Barbara Holiday has returned as editor. Barbara never altogether left the *Applegater*, as she returned as the layout editor after resigning the

editorship, and then in December she rejoined the board. Now she will pick up where Bert left off—and where she left off before Bert took over—and serve the paper and the community once again with her strong leadership.

We are grateful to Bert for the time he has given us and his dedication to this paper and to the field of independent journalism altogether. After leaving the *Applegater*, he continues as editor of *Ashland.news*, a position he has held since October 2021 and one that has become more demanding now that it is moving into a print edition as well as the online edition.

Thank you, Bert. Don’t be a stranger in the Applegate! We would love to see you at the Gater-est Show on Earth next fall.

Welcome back, Barbara. We’re glad you have returned and look forward to working with you as editor again.

Diana Coogle
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**We want your
opinions and letters!
Email to gater@applegater.org.**



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