

## 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. We are a community-based newspaper that receives diverse opinions on different topics. Letters should be no longer than 450 words, and may be edited for grammar and length. Opinion Pieces should be no longer than 600 words. All Letters and Opinion Pieces must be signed, with a full street address or P.O. Box and phone number. Individual Letters may or may not be published in consecutive issues.

Address Opinion Pieces and Letters to the Editor to:  
The Applegater c/o Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc.  
7386 Highway 238 • PMB 308  
Jacksonville, OR 97530  
Email: gater@applegater.org

## "BLM people have changed, bureaucracy has not"

Dear Editor:

Chris Bratt's most recent column, suggesting that the local BLM staff have no regard for the concerned public comes as I am compiling a report on a (my) neighborhood fuel reduction project that we implemented on BLM lands. Post-project opinions from our group of 23 residents paint a different picture of the BLM than Chris does. Some sample quotes were "willing to work with private landowners," "an openness to new ideas was refreshing" and "they dealt with us on a local level and seemed to listen."

Like Chris, I too, "take the opportunity for citizens to directly participate in federal decision making" (his quote). Unlike Chris, I've tried to work with the agencies to find solutions, instead of against them. I have worked on wildfire and forestry issues for over eight years now and I've always tried to be respectful and courteous to agency folks especially if I don't agree on an issue (which many times I do not). I've always found the BLM to be helpful, informative and very willing to meet and answer even my dumbest of questions or concerns. They have listened to my concerns and at times have changed projects because of them.

Why Chris feels that BLM folks today are not of "good will" (his phrase), why he calls them self-righteous—I'm not sure. There definitely was a different mindset among federal agency employees back in the 80s, when the transcript that Chris shared took place. Federal land managers were usually 'ologists or scientists, focused on taking care of the forests. Nowadays, they are trained and tasked to consult, communicate and collaborate with other entities, including the public. I don't believe I've run across a BLMer yet who has the attitude exhibited in the taped conversation with Mr. Bach. I feel that today's BLM employees and managers are real, everyday people who work with the public as much as they possible can, considering the partisan poppycock that their bosses (the politicians in D.C.) dole out from on high.

Our neighborhood group and I do, however, have very different opinions regarding dealing with the federal bureaucracy! It's too slow, has too many rules and regulations, and therefore is not in sync with nature. Perhaps this is what Chris is really fighting? If so, maybe he can quit calling the local BLM people names, since he complains of others doing this to him. The federal folks are, after all, diligent people, as Chris says he is. Many are also our neighbors.

Sandy Shaffer, Applegate, OR

## Wilderville Methodist Church

Dear Editor

I have been enjoying the Applegater for a lot of years. The recent paper "Summer 2009" has an article and photo of the Methodist Church in Wilderville. It is of great interest. I made copies of the picture and took them to the church service. Members who have been there a long time said this is the earliest picture of the church they have ever seen. In the picture there are a few Robinson's. There are still a lot of Robinson descendants here.

Thank you for your interesting newspaper.

P.S. The basement of the church has a terrific rummage sale the 1st Saturday after the first Sunday monthly.

Bill and Connie Crooks, Wilderville, OR

## OPINION

## There is no Away

BY DARYL JACKSON

So many times, when we are referring to some nasty problem we say "Oh it'll go away."

But where exactly is this Away place?

In the community of Williams we have been struggling against the Josephine County Public Works Department in their determination to apply chemicals in their roadside vegetation management program. The county feels it is being safe in this practice, claiming that if a toxin is being applied "it will go away." Scientific research has proven otherwise.

For almost 20 years the community of Williams has been very vocal in its opposition to the application of poison in our watershed.

Josephine County has been equally adamant in voicing the budgetary necessity to spray the roadsides. In essence, they say

include spray "drift," bio-accumulation, genetic damage and resistance requiring increased application or newer and stronger chemicals.

Herbicides, pesticides and other synthetic chemicals have long lists of ingredients.

Many are part of the "inert ingredients" list. It is shocking to see known cancer causing ingredients like mercury, fluoride, DDT and 2-4-D (Agent Orange) included in that list. More importantly, they are not required to be listed as ingredients because they are not "significant" in quantity. (This is similar to small bullets included in a box of big bullets; both are lethal.)

Counties, states and nations worldwide have begun to apply integrated vegetation management programs (IVMP) that most often do not rely upon

**"We cannot afford to allow Josephine County to spray in our community." The real cost of spray must include health effects to everything that lives in this area.**

they cannot afford to deal with roadside vegetation management without using chemical spray.

Williams counters this claim with the argument that "We cannot afford to allow Josephine County to spray in our community." The real cost of spray must include health effects to everything that lives in this area. Beyond that, we would like to see no spray in this entire region or the entire planet for that matter. The reason being... There is no Away.

These chemicals are persistent, toxic to many organisms and accumulate over time despite the claims made by their manufacturers.

Fortunately, Williams has quite a number of well educated and determined folks who have researched the chemical composition and effect of herbicides, insecticides and other synthetic chemicals. The science is in. It is not an oversimplification to refer to these chemicals as poison. Years ago, they were often called weed killer or bug killer and neither of those terms are oversimplified. These chemicals kill many plants animals and insects; not just "bugs and weeds." Problems with chemical application

chemicals to be effective. Notably, the U.S. Highway Department has developed and implemented an IVMP that is based upon Lady Bird Johnson's (President Lyndon Johnson's very significant other) Beautify America Campaign. That program has inventoried and applied native vegetation as a way to compete with noxious and invasive "weeds." It has been proven, repeatedly, to be more cost effective than spraying chemicals and nicer to look at too.

In meetings with the Josephine County Commissioners and Public Works Department the community of Williams has established a "No Spray" moratorium for one year. Our intention is to develop an IVMP that does not include spraying. To do so we must roll up our sleeves (as the Grants Pass Daily Courier suggests) and do a lot of the vegetation management ourselves.

We are currently accepting donations of time, energy, dollars and equipment towards this goal and are writing grant applications to further the process.

For more information contact: daryl.jackson22@live.com

Darryl Jackson • 541-291-3199

**The Herb Shop**

Highest Quality Vitamins and Minerals  
Over 500 Bulk Herbs, Teas and Spices  
Therapeutic Essential Oils  
Homeopathics  
Natural Beauty Products  
Rare Crystals and Gem Stones  
Mail Order Available

541-479-3602

Store Hours  
Mon. - Fri. 9 am to 6 pm  
Sat. 9 am to 5 pm

Bring in this ad & receive a 10% discount with your purchase!!!

www.bulkherbshop.com

247 SW "G" St., Grants Pass, OR 97526 (On the corner of 4th & "G")

Spa is your place for health, beauty & relaxation

massage, facials, pedi/manicures, body wraps, body glows, waxing, sauna, etc.

We are a co op cottage retreat in Jacksonville  
Open every day by appointment 899.7893  
see full Spa Menu at jacksonvillespa.com

Spa

**Applegate River Ranch Lodge & Restaurant**

Restaurant Hours: Wed thru Sun 5-9 / Closed Mon-Tues  
Wed—Live music at the Lodge—limited food menu  
Thur—Locals Night entrees starting at \$10  
Lodge open 7 days a week. All rooms Mon thru Thurs \$95  
Time to schedule your Christmas Parties  
Check out liveatthegate.com for our music concert lineup  
Happy Hour 5-7 Wed thru Sun  
Lodge—541-846-6690 • Restaurant—541-846-6082  
Wedding/Special Events—541-660-0244

Pioneer Bridge at Applegate, Oregon

**Tom and Mom Cat Campaign 2009**

Every fall all those kittens that were born in the spring are now having their own litters. **Stop the cycle now, get your Tom cats and Mom cats fixed in October.**

**\$25 for a cat spay or neuter!**

Certificates on sale at most pet supply stores.  
call 858-3325 or visit [www.spayneuter.org](http://www.spayneuter.org)