

Creating our future together: Applegate Valley Economic Vitality Roadmap

BY BONNIE RINALDI

Have you heard about the Applegate Valley Vitality Roadmap? With assistance from Rural Development Initiatives (RDI), working with the Ford Family Foundation, we have already had three community meetings, which, in a fast action, four-month process (October 2016 – January 2017), have initiated the development of a “roadmap to economic success in the Applegate Valley.”

After an initial phase for background input and assessment, the community has identified priorities for action to sustain and improve the vitality of the Applegate Valley. This overarching desire was to support existing farms and businesses

without harming our environment or lifestyle. Education, housing, travel accommodations, branding Applegate as “organic,” and numerous other ideas were components of the finalized list of priorities for action:

- Maintain Applegate Valley authenticity, sustainability, and quality of life.
- Create a sustainable inter-generational, hands-on network that provides learning opportunities for youth.
- Create an intra-Applegate Valley support system that makes it easier for local businesses to be successful, including development of low-impact lodging opportunities.

Teams were created to develop action steps to pursue these priorities and will present these steps at the next community meeting on March 2 from 5:30 to 8 pm at the Applegate Valley Fire District community room, 1095 Upper Applegate Road, Ruch. RDI will continue to assist us in identifying potential funding sources and other resources to help us make progress.

It is important that we define the future of our community in order to preserve it as we like. Your input is critical to guiding the future of the Applegate!

Please attend one of the upcoming meetings to be a part of this process.

For more information, visit the Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation (your neighbors who manage Cantrall Buckley Park) website at GACDC.org. Look for the “AV Roadmap Project” tab at the top of the website. You can also contact

Amanda Close at RDI at aclose@rdiinc.org or 206-919-0186.

Bonnie Rinaldi
Chair, Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation
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Volunteers needed!

The *Applegater* team is looking for volunteers to help organize our next big fundraiser to be held this summer.

If you would like to join the Fundraising Committee, please contact Debbie Tollefson at debbie.avrealty@gmail.com or 541-973-9184.

Stories of Southern Oregon project: Folks, fields, forests

Tell your story. Scan your photographs. Preserve your family history. Share your proud heritage.

Do you have a logging story to tell? Were you raised on a farm or ranch here in southern Oregon? If your answer is yes, then please consider sharing your proud heritage with others at the 100th anniversary of the McKee Bridge celebration on Saturday, June 10, from 11 am to 4 pm.

Southern Oregon is rich with stories about generations of families who have plowed fields, run cattle, or worked in the dense forests or in the mills. Share your memories with your community by participating in the Stories of Southern Oregon project, an online library at Southern Oregon University (SOU). Participants will be able to videotape a ten-minute story, scan up to five photographs, and receive a flash drive with their video and images along with a sample set of archival supplies. SOU faculty members Maureen Battistella and Vicky Sturtevant and local historians will be on hand to help folks along and demonstrate how to

preserve family documents for generations to come.

Story Days are scheduled throughout Jackson and Josephine counties in May and June: Eagle Point Public Library and the Eagle Point Vintage Fair on May 11 and 13; Del Rio Vineyards and the Gold Hill Museum on June 1 and 3; McKee Bridge 100th Anniversary Celebration on June 10; Grants Pass Public Library on June 15; Smokejumper Base Museum in Cave Junction on June 17; Pottsville Museum's Antique Tractor Fair in Merlin on June 18; and Kerbyville Museum on June 24. Well-known historian Dr. Jeff LaLande, US Forest Service (retired), will talk about the history of logging in southern Oregon at some of the events. Later in the year, videotaped stories will be shared at 4-H booths at the Jackson and Josephine county fairs.

The National Endowment for the Humanities Common Heritage Program funded the Stories of Southern



Horse-drawn plow circa 1910.
Photo courtesy of Hillcrest Orchards.

Oregon project with a grant to SOU to collect and preserve agricultural and logging family histories in Jackson and Josephine counties. Co-investigators Maureen Battistella (assistant professor affiliate and research anthropologist at SOU) and Dr. Victoria Sturtevant (SOU sociology professor emerita) will work with SOU students, local libraries, historical societies, and youth groups to identify heritage families who will participate in the project.

“This project is important because it helps southern Oregon’s largely rural communities trace, preserve, and share their rural heritage,” says Maureen. “It will document how and why population growth, economic development, and new agricultural opportunities have affected southern Oregon’s heritage industries.”

Stories, photographs, and memorabilia discovered during heritage day events will be digitized and made available to the public, thanks to the expertise of SOU librarians and the Southern Oregon Digital Archives at Southern Oregon University’s Hannon Library. The Southern Oregon Digital Archives is a publicly available digital portal, making stories available to the world over the web. Jeff LaLande is a consulting historian.



Logging near Butte Falls circa 1940.
Photo courtesy of Jeff LaLande.

While some of southern Oregon’s landscape has changed dramatically over the last hundred years, there are many families who still work the land and harvest timber in the forests. In some areas, though, historic family farms have yielded to housing developments, pear trees have been pulled out to make room for vineyards, and the biggest trees stand tall only in memory. The project will increase awareness of the heritage of work life in agriculture and timber and highlight the importance of preserving and sharing community values.

The Stories of Southern Oregon project builds on and extends the heritage preservation model developed for earlier grants awarded to SOU by the Oregon Heritage Commission, the Rogue Valley Winegrowers Association, and the Erath Family Foundation.

For more information about the Stories of Southern Oregon project and to find out about additional Story Days, visit storiesofsouthernoregon.com, email storiesofsouthernoregon@gmail.com, or call 541-552-0743.

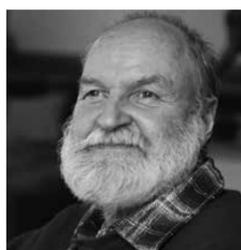
■ **UNSUNG HEROES** feel the *Applegater* helps fill a big piece of this void, and *Continued from page 4* so for the past 15 years I’ve been a regular writer for the *Applegater*, studying and sharing new science and technology about wildfire and emergency preparedness issues. I also serve on the *Applegater*’s editorial committee.



Paul Tipton. I chose the Applegate Valley as home in 1972 and still consider it to be the best place in the world to live. I am now retired from work in forestry, in viticulture, and on many local construction projects. A strong supporter of the *Applegater* since its inception and a believer in it as a valuable part of our community connection, I have, in recent years, copy edited, proofread, written articles, and tried to keep a poem somewhere in a corner of the Gater. I have a good feeling

about being part of the somewhat amorphous team that comes together each season to put together a newsmagazine that is a credit to, and a reflection of, our diverse community. And I really appreciate what everybody else does to make life in the Applegate such a wonderful experience.

Greeley Wells. As a 26-year resident of the Applegate community, I have been involved with the Gater since its inception. I have enjoyed our paper for its local flavor, insights, and information. The Gater makes me continually aware of the special place in which we live. As I write, make art, serve, volunteer, and enjoy this beautiful place, I realize it’s the people who are represented by this wonderful newspaper that count.



— SEE MORE INFORMATION AND ARTICLES ONLINE —

- Community Calendar
 - Book review of *Spooked* by J.D. Rogers
 - Movie review of *Hidden Figures* by Mikell Nielsen
- Visit our website at applegater.org.