

NEXT GENERATION

Next Generation features the talents of our local students and school news and updates. All schools in the Applegate Valley are encouraged to submit news, art, writing, photography, and any other creative pieces to gater@applegater.org.

Ruch student essay to be published

"We sat for a while. I sat and ate crackers. Then, I felt a tug. I was so excited! I could hear the splash of the fish."

This is an excerpt from an essay written by Cora Snoke, a fifth-grade student at Ruch Community School. Cora's essay, titled "Applegate Lake," earned her recognition from the Oregon secretary of state through the second *Oregon Blue Book* Essay Contest.

"The *Oregon Blue Book* is the official state fact book about all levels of government in Oregon, Oregon's arts and history organizations, our education systems, our elections history, our economy and how various levels of government are financed. The *Blue Book* is compiled and published by the Oregon State Archives, a division of the Oregon Secretary of State's Office" (oregonsosblog.us/2016/05/secretary-state-invites-oregonians-ages-contribute-oregon-blue-book).

Cora and all the students from Ms. Major's 3/4/5 multi-age classroom at Ruch Community School participated in the contest by creating essays about their favorite thing to do in Oregon's great outdoors.

As a runner-up in the elementary division, Cora's essay will be published in the soon-to-be-released *Oregon Blue Book*. In addition, Cora, her parents, and her teacher have been invited to the state capitol in March for the *Blue Book* release



Cora Snoke (center) was recognized for her winning essay. From left to right, Julie Barry; father, Ken Snoke; mother, Sara Hyman; teacher, Sara Major; school board chair, Karen Starchvick; and Medford School District superintendent, Brian Shumate.

event. There, she and her parents will be able to share her story with an Oregon state representative and a state senator.

"I think that you will agree with me when I say our future is bright, and I am as proud of Cora and the rest of the students submitting essays as they are of our state," said Jeanne P. Atkins, Oregon secretary of state.

Cora and her parents were invited to Medford School District's school board meeting on Monday, January 23, 2017, to be recognized for her winning essay.

Ruch Community School is very proud of Cora and her dedication to being an exemplary ambassador of our school. Congratulations, Cora!

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Committee formed to study Williams Elementary School viability

Williams parents and community members, along with representatives of the Three Rivers School District (TRSD), have formed the Williams Elementary School Viability Committee.

The committee's first action will be to distribute a survey in the Williams School catchment area to gain a more comprehensive picture of its community in terms of the number of students who are in the area, the school choices parents are making, and the potential for raising the school's enrollment.

"We're at the stage where we need information in order to move forward in an effective, positive way," said Darrell Erb Jr., principal of Williams School. "This is an opportunity to take a look at our community in a new way and to find ways to make our school a more dynamic and inviting place for students to learn and grow."

The committee is hopeful members of the Williams community will respond to the survey in large numbers.

"Your participation with this survey would be greatly appreciated," said Greg Cox, father of a Williams School student.

"We love this school and want it to stay as Williams Elementary into the future!"

The survey can be obtained in paper form from Williams Elementary School, Williams General Store, Williams Country Store, Provolt Store, the Williams Branch Library, and Williams Indoor Winter Market at Pacifica.

The survey can also be obtained at sites.google.com/a/threerivers.k12.or.us/williams-elementary-school, on Facebook by searching for these two pages: "97544" and "Williams local (97544)," and on Jo's List (for subscribers).

The committee was formed in response to the TRSD school board's request for district superintendent David Valenzuela to research the school's viability. Enrollment has been around 60 students over the past several years, which prompted the board's request.

Contact Darrell Erb or Mindi Gallegos at Williams Elementary School at 541-846-7224 or Stephanie Allen-Hart at the district office at 541-862-3111, ext. 5201. Also, Greg Cox, parent and committee member, can be contacted at 541-846-6594.

Applegate students return to Cantrall Buckley: Long live the monarchs!

On first impression, the Applegate Valley is truly awe-inspiring with fruitful vineyards, a sparkling river, and majestic mountains. Folks who live here have reason to be proud of their home; visitors leave reluctantly, with a promise of return.

One particular visitor, however, is not feeling welcome here lately. The monarch butterfly, once plentiful, has come into hard times—its habitat is disappearing as agricultural activity increases in favor of commercial crops.

For Applegate School students, though, this situation provides a learning and service opportunity.

Thanks to a partnership with Janis Mohr-Tipton of the Applegate Valley Garden Club and Bonnie Allison of the US Forest Service, science teacher Star McAdam's students will visit Cantrall Buckley Park this spring to study the park's flora and fauna and develop pollinator gardens for monarchs. The program will also bring local experts into the classroom to discuss the scientific importance of supporting pollinators in their journey across the valley.

"It's a great opportunity for students to learn how ecosystems work," said Star. "Hands-on science enriches learning and helps students understand the sensitive nature of ecosystems and our role as stewards of them."

For Applegate students, ensuring monarch butterflies are healthy and happy in this valley is a tradition.

Linda Kappen, a member of Southern Oregon Monarch Advocates and an instructional aide at the school, has been keeping monarchs at Applegate School for some time. The pollinator garden behind the school's office attracts the butterflies to lay their eggs on its milkweed. Linda takes the caterpillars from the garden and nurtures their development until they are fully grown.

Tagged as part of the Washington State University study, the monarchs are then released, often by the hands of Applegate students. Teachers in the school use Linda's program to enrich their students' study of science.

This program at Cantrall Buckley Park is part of the school's evolving participation in monarch stewardship.

Fire station tour interrupted by an emergency

The Applegate Valley Fire District opened its doors to Applegate School teacher Kellie Halsted's second- and third-grade students on Friday, January 27, as a reward for winning a school-wide competition initiated by the fire district.

Students were challenged to go home and take "selfies" while they changed batteries in smoke detectors and sat with their families to make a family fire escape plan. By having the highest percentage of participants of all classes, Kellie's students earned the trip to the Ruch fire station.

The students toured the station, and each was awarded a fire helmet. Predictably, students were awed by the equipment and engines and listened carefully as firefighters explained their important jobs.



It turned out that the highlight of the visit was not the tour or the helmets or even the equipment and engines. Rather, it was a loud fire alarm that sent fire personnel into their well-drilled emergency mode!

Applegate students were in a state of wide-eyed disbelief as they were treated to an up-front-and-close view of fire personnel departing for a real fire call.

Kellie was delighted with her little charges. "They were safe, responsible, and respectful during all of this excitement," she said.

Applegate and Ruch schools to meet for Battle of the Books matches

Ruch Community School will host Applegate School in two Battle of the Books matches on Friday, March 3, at 1 pm.

Both schools will participate with their elementary and middle-school teams for this "neighborly" competition. The match is part of a growing partnership between the schools.

"Being able to collaborate and engage in activities together is the beauty of being small schools," said Julie Barry, Ruch School principal. "These opportunities

will facilitate the community building that will build long-lasting relationships in the future."

Darrell Erb, Applegate principal, agreed. "We're just so close in proximity and nicely aligned in terms of what we believe is best for students. It makes sense to get our kids together for some constructive struggle!" he said.

The schools' volleyball teams scrimmaged earlier this year, and other ways to get the schools together are being explored.



Both teams keeping strategy close to the vest. Photo, left: Applegate Battlers (from left to right) Zeyna Seck, Chris Hartley, and Freyja Moeves. Photo, right: Ruch Battlers (from left to right) Cimara Phillips, Katlyn Hathaway, and Lupita Estrada.