

Community Inventory Report from the Little Applegate Valley

BY MEGAN FEHRMAN AND TOMI HAZEL

In the spring of 2014, a couple of neighbors met to plan a series of community meetings to map our resources using ideas based on exercises called Community Asset Mapping and Scenario Practices—that is, setting up a session to record information about the strengths and resources of a community and then envisioning solutions to challenges and brainstorming how to move beyond imagined constraints. Once community strengths and resources are inventoried and mapped, the group can more easily think about how to build on their assets to address community needs to improve the health of particular places and environments.

Thirty folks from various neighborhoods and farms in the Little Applegate attended the first meeting. We recruited a local farmer to emcee the meeting, while Megan Fehrman and Tomi Hazel facilitated the group process. Tomi Hazel hung up some posters on systems and talked the group through the concept and procedure. We all agreed that none of the data or information was to be photographed or posted online and that this was just a pen-and-paper exercise for our community.

Everyone went to work as we began the first of two poster-making sessions. In the first round, groups worked together by place—each farm or homestead teamed with neighbors to jot down, on the ten posters, resources they had, thus starting to map the assets that the community held. They had five minutes per poster, and the categories ranged from local businesses, nonprofits and community organizations, skills and knowledge, equipment, natural resources, transportation, and communication systems.

In the second session, we broke into groups based on interest areas, with each group analyzing just one of the posters. Folks began clumping the information into bubbles on a new piece of poster paper and then looking to see how the bubbles related

to each other. Lines were drawn between bubbles, with action words on the lines or where the intersection of bubbles suggested places of overlap and collaboration. We did all this in about two hours.

Two months later we gathered again. We hung the 20-plus posters in two parallel lines so that folks could tour the first meeting's work. Then we brainstormed what was missing—were there other categories that seemed crucial to have on the map? What actionable projects leaped out of the information? Where could we go from here? Several committees formed to work on new categories or to move forward with the obvious projects. A bulletin board at Buncom, a bus stop at Crump, and a farm store at Yale Creek Ranch made the agenda. Several small businesses in our valley talked about sharing bulk buying and about recycling by-products between operations. We could share event calendars and set up better communication systems. There was a lot of enthusiasm for this community inventory process, and some of the projects have seen some progress. We are now planning our next meeting for late spring or early summer of 2017.

Talking about this experience with folks from around the Applegate generated interest from other neighborhoods. We hope that this report encourages and enables other community inventories or, at the very least, encourages some mutual exchange among residents in the various drainages of our eclectic valley.

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■ ED REILLY

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efficiency, analytically unpacking tough issues, pragmatically solving problems.

Sharing recipes and travel stories, trading gardening tips and produce, talking art and ecology—these are some of my favorite memories with Ed. With confidence, I know this perspective is not uniquely mine. What a treat, what an honor, to have known you, Ed. You will be missed.

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Ed Reilly was the man I'd go to at the US Forest Service for detailed maps of the Applegate watershed to run in the *Applegater*. Before that time (I think

it was the mid-1990s), maps showing ownership of all the government agencies and industrial and private properties did not exist. Nor were there maps showing all roads, streams, riparian areas, proposed timber sales, etc. These maps were a wealth of information to those who were interested.

My many conversations over the years with Ed started with me requesting maps or articles I hoped to get from him for the paper and often ended talking about music. He was the only person I knew who was into the band Government Mule more than me—Ed had seen them in concert multiple times. Ed was the man, and I know he's still rockin'.

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—APOLOGIES—

Melvin Guches, younger brother of the late Chuck Guches, should have been mentioned in the obituary that ran in the spring *Applegater*. We apologize for the omission.

Wanna go for a ride?

BY BRYAN HUNTER

Wanna go for a ride...on your bike? Now that spring is here, you may enjoy some pedaling pleasures—around the block, on nearby mountain trails, or across town. The simple joys of coasting down hills and cruising through the landscape are a delight for us all. But be careful—cycling can be dangerous! Cars and trucks driven by distracted folks don't mix well with two-wheelers, partly because we're not all aware of some of the "Rules of the Road."

I've recently learned two unobvious legalities regarding cars and bikes. First, when passing a cyclist, the car driver is required to stay six feet from the bicycle rider (I think it's so that if the rider falls over, the car won't run over the rider). "Hold on," you may say, "to do so would make me cross the double yellow line and that's illegal!" Which brings me to the second Road Rule: when passing a cyclist, pedestrian, horse, etc., you need to maintain that six-foot clearance so you are allowed, in fact required, to cross the double yellow line when safe and oncoming traffic permits. Astonishing, right?

Did you know that bicyclists are forbidden to ride against traffic, on sidewalks, and in crosswalks? And, of course, when we're on our bikes, we must abide by all traffic laws. Given the laws of momentum, gravity, and inertia, it can be difficult to adhere to the nuances of stop signs and red lights, but they're important signposts for safety and civility. And at night, please have lights front and rear!

Some years ago, at sundown in Williams, I was struck from behind by a beater car with one misaligned headlight (and me with no bike lights...). I miraculously



Bryan Hunter and daughter Hazel across from Williams Store in downtown Williams.

survived with limited injuries. A perfect storm of ignorance and poverty, I suppose, when I failed to glance back at the jalopy or move farther away into the gravel.

Some 15 years have elapsed, and I'm still riding, now with lights and extreme caution, enjoying the thrill evermore. Most of the time cars are respectful of me in the road, but it only takes one time to wind up splattered. And while most of the roads are safely navigable with the shoulder, there are some treacherous spots!

So, a handful of us have embarked on the process of attaining some bike lanes in our Williams Valley. Our first phase will connect our downtown area from the post office/general store to Williams Elementary School, a distance of two-tenths of a mile. We envision a lane for biking, walking, horses, and more on each side of the street. We're working on a number of feasible designs in conjunction with Josephine County Public Works, Oregon Department of Transportation, and other bicycle advocacy groups.

Stay tuned for our progress as we turn the wheels of safe and enjoyable nonmotorized travel. And keep your eyes alert for those of us not in solid metal one-ton vehicles with seat belts!

If you've a passion for bike lanes in Williams, join us.

Bryan Hunter • 541-846-9443

■ RAT RACE

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room, plenty of parking, lots of landing going on (depending on the task for the day), and, of course, wine." He adds that the organizers of the event try to keep bystanders at only those mentioned places "due to potential traffic-accident issues and massive overcrowding and transportation issues at top launch."

So choose your spot and take a folding chair, your favorite smart device, and this issue of the *Applegater* to reference the following:

- For local event information: facebook.com/RatRacePG/
- For a live broadcast of the event: mphsports.com/media/ustream.html. This site may have live updates on the track logs from the GPS tracking devices the paragliders use.
- For a live view of the race: xcfind.paragliders.us/map.html?id=59. Typically many of the pilots also have their GPS device postings here. You can view their routes overlaid with geographical imagery and the roads to get your bearings.
- For past photos: Go to Flickr and search for "Rat Race Paragliding." This URL will get you started: flickr.com/search/?text=rat%20race%20paragliding.

Norm explains that the event is judged by several criteria, including hitting waypoints, coming in first to the goal location, and not jumping the start



Rat Race photo by Julie Gever, flickr.com.

cylinder before the race begins. All this information is officially judged once contestants have uploaded their tracks from the GPS devices. "No maneuvers are encouraged," Norm says. "That sort of thing occurs at Lost Creek Lake during the later summer months and involves tow up by boat to maximize altitude, then, after release from the tow line, acrobatic maneuvers during the free flight down."

Some paragliding trivia: (1) Paragliding was developed and named by NASA. (2) The oldest female paraglider, according to Wikipedia, is Peggy McAlpine from Northern Cyprus, who took to the sky at the age of 104 from a 2,400-foot peak. (3) Paragliding is not hang gliding (framed-wing design) or parasailing (a parachute). (4) It is not as dangerous as it looks as long as the paraglider avoids bad weather conditions. But Norm admits that, if your gear fails, the thing to do is "throw your laundry [reserve parachute]...and pray."

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