

NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

— A Greater Applegate —



Members of the new Applegate Valley Nonprofit Network held a productive meeting at Pacifica in early November to gain insight into the needs and future of local nonprofit organizations. Photo: Brooke Nuckles Gentekos.

Bringing value to our nonprofit organizations

I have discovered that a quest to understand the impact of the nonprofit organizations serving the Applegate Valley can be daunting.

One Sunday afternoon I tried to figure out how many nonprofits we have and how much money they raise for the good deeds they perform. I searched all nonprofits with a Grants Pass, Jacksonville, or Williams mailing address. Then I had to guess which ones from Grants Pass and Jacksonville are serving the Applegate Valley. Then I noticed that some of our more prominent nonprofit organizations have addresses in Medford or Ashland. Ultimately, I gave it up. A nonprofit serves the Applegate Valley if it says it does, and there's no way to know that without hearing from each directly.

Not the most wasteful Sunday I've ever spent, but still frustrating. I have an idea about the number and size of the nonprofits in our area, but not a clear enough one to say out loud. If only the nonprofits serving the Applegate would let us, A Greater Applegate (AGA), know who they are, what they do, what resources they have, and what more they need to improve the quality of life in the Applegate Valley.

Some of you readers are way ahead now and thinking, this guy needs a survey. And you're right, and we've got one. If you represent a nonprofit located in or serving the Applegate Valley, we want to hear from you. When you have 15 minutes to spare, go to gacdc.org and complete the survey.

Why does it matter?

In June, AGA launched the AGA Nonprofit Network, funded through a grant from The Ford Family Foundation, to promote community building and community-led action. About 40 people representing 24 organizations attended and agreed we can benefit each other and the greater Applegate by sharing what we do, what we know, and what we need.

A volunteer steering committee of 11 met on November 5 at Pacifica to answer some of these questions, but we need to hear from everyone. If we know how to reach you, we'll notify you of future gatherings planned for February and June. So that's the first thing: let us know

you're interested, and you will be invited. Let us know what you're interested in, and we'll work with you to try to make it happen.

Equally important, there's power in numbers, and we will have more influence with regional leaders and funders if we work together. We already know there are more than 24 nonprofit organizations in the Applegate, and the collective revenue and resources we bring to the Applegate might surprise you.

Perhaps what is most important is that we can learn together and from each other to the betterment of all. Organizations across the valley are stepping up to willingly support this effort and each other. What can happen if we pool resources? What can happen if we work together?

New tool

One example is a new tool on Applegate Valley Connect, the community website partnership of the *Applegater* and A Greater Applegate. Community-based organizations can now post their volunteer needs and contact information on the website, and the rest of us can browse to see where we want to join in. It's easy for the organizations and easy for people looking for volunteer opportunities for themselves or their families. Go to applegateconnect.org, click on Volunteer, and check it out.

Some ideas that AGA is considering: (1) An annual nonprofit day in June, where you can learn about the organizations working on our behalf and how you can contribute to those that interest you. (2) Training and outreach for new board members of nonprofits. (3) A local meet-the-funders event. (4) Lots of opportunity for fun and camaraderie. What would nonprofit organizations like to add?

If you want to be notified about AGA's Nonprofit Network activities, email us at agreaterapplegate@gmail.com. If you want to learn more about the AGA Nonprofit Network, email our committee chair, Megan Fehrman, at mefehrman@gmail.com. If you have comments or ideas about Applegate Valley Connect, contact Barbara Holiday at barbaraholiday.aga@gmail.com.

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— McKee Bridge Historical Society —

Pie and a movie at McKee Bridge

Volunteers scurrying around with tables and chairs and boxes of things, preparing for the McKee Bridge Historical Society's (MBHS) October event, might have thought it to be Halloween when a huge white ghost unfurled itself at the end of the bridge and shook around. But then the ghost became just a big white tarp, doubling as an impromptu movie screen for the showing of *A Canyon Passage*, a 1946 film presumably set in Jacksonville, Oregon, circa 1856. However, the most recognizable scenes included Mount Thielsen and Crater Lake and the surrounding Cascades area, as well as possibly Fort Klamath.

This classic western starred some well-known actors of the day, including Dana Andrews and Susan Hayward. "Old Buttermilk Sky," a song by Hoagy Carmichael and Jack Brooks, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song.

The film is based on a novel by Portland-born Ernest Haycox that was serialized in the *Saturday Evening Post*. I'll bet that a number of readers remember eagerly waiting for the next *Saturday Evening Post* to arrive in the mail, but only long-time Applegater and McKee Bridge supporter Jan Wilt remembered all the actors in the film!

But I did mention pie and boxes of things. They weren't all pies, but 12 exquisite desserts created by local volunteer bakers—some beautiful pies, but also elaborate cakes and brownies—

were silently auctioned off to those attending the movie. Winning bids were revealed after the movie, so no one got to eat pie then, but popcorn and warm drinks were provided by MBHS board members and volunteers.

If you're wondering why you didn't know about this fun (and fortunately warm for a late October evening) event, it's probably because you haven't taken the time to become a member of MBHS yet or don't live in the Upper Applegate area that we've been targeting to increase our membership. Unfortunately, the number of people who remember the bridge in its heyday and have long supported it is dwindling, so it's up to the next generations to help preserve our local history.

Individual or family memberships cost the same—a moderate \$20 per year, which supports our nonprofit organization so that we can maintain the bridge for public use and promote its history and the history of the Upper Applegate area. To get in on the fun and support local history, contact me at mckeebridge1917@gmail.com or 541-846-7501, or address regular mail to MBHS, PO Box 854, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

McKee Bridge t-shirts make great holiday gifts and are now available at a reduced price of only \$12 at the Ruch Country Store. Two colors, all sizes, while they last. Get yours soon.

Paul Tipton
Chair, MBHS

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