

**NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES**

**— A Greater Applegate —**

**Time to support our local businesses**

In the last edition of *Applegater*, I wrote about the efforts of A Greater Applegate (AGA) to build a nonprofit network and develop ways to support those organizations that are committed to creating a better quality of life for all of us in the Applegate Watershed. That effort is well under way!

In October 2018, we held a World Café-style gathering at Pacifica and began identifying priorities for us as a group. On March 5, 2019, from 5 - 7 pm at the Applegate River Lodge, we will be hosting The Ford Family Foundation in a conversation about building community in rural settings. All nonprofit representatives serving the Applegate Valley (AV) are welcome. (The Applegate River Lodge is located at 15100 Highway 238 in Applegate.)

**New business network**

Now let's look at how we can support our local businesses. Then I'll share a proposal for a new business network.

Participants in the Applegate Valley Community Vitality Roadmap project (March 2017) identified a system to support and grow AV businesses. Specific recommendations included: (1) develop an AV business network, (2) develop and launch a "support local" campaign, (3) create cooperative marketing ventures like themed events and a local makers' market, (4) develop and promote low-impact lodging opportunities, (5) create a business incubator and business support services, (6) create an online business directory, and (7) identify and establish vertical integration opportunities.

Frankly, as a tiny volunteer organization with no real budget, we at AGA were overwhelmed with this list when it emerged. We began by creating an online business directory on the Applegate Valley Connect website ([applegateconnect.org](http://applegateconnect.org)) but put off all the other work while we built our infrastructure. With significant help from The Ford Family Foundation, an

energized board, and an intention to bring on staff, we are ready to tackle the creation of a business network to help us prioritize and implement the recommendations listed above and others that continue to emerge. One that we hear a lot is the desire for a map of businesses. Another one, probably the most frequent, is that local businesses wish that other businesses knew them and supported them. This is the essence of a business network.

A Greater Applegate has begun to create a network by compiling a database of over 300 businesses in the Applegate Watershed. (According to the business overview below, we still have a lot more businesses to add.) As soon as we bring on staff support, we'll be reaching out to you to find out:

1. What can a business network do for you and your business? How can we support you?
2. What skills and resources can you offer other businesses or the network?
3. Other than an opportunity to network, what else would you like to happen at our gatherings?
  - Develop an Applegate Valley brand or marketing campaign, event, or shared collateral?
  - Meet with county, state, or regional business or economic staff?
  - Meet with business experts? What kinds?
4. How else can we support each other?
5. How often would you like to gather?

Even more important, though, is that we need to know if you think this is an effort worth undertaking and if you want to help. We want to create a volunteer leadership group to help shape this business network. You bring the energy and ideas, and we'll provide a meal and much appreciation. If you're interested, contact me at my email below or at [agreaterapplegate@gmail.com](mailto:agreaterapplegate@gmail.com). I hope to hear from you soon!

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Chair, A Greater Applegate  
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**— McKee Bridge Historical Society —**

**More water under the bridge**

As I'm writing this, the rain continues to come down, which is the best news there is here in the Applegate. The water flowing under the McKee Bridge has been so low in recent times that I started to worry that people would begin questioning why folks ever needed to build a bridge across the river!

I'm often asked why covered bridges were built. The answer is quite simple: to preserve the bridges for a longer period of time, because bridges were constructed primarily of wood, the most readily available building material.

However, even earlier covered bridges on the East Coast often had some components of iron after it became possible and profitable to move the raw materials in the early 1800s. The Howe Truss structure of the McKee Bridge is dependent on vertical steel rods used for tensioning the top and bottom chords of the trusses.

During the most recent restoration of the bridge, two 120-foot-long steel I-beams were rolled across the deck of the bridge. Then the bridge was pulled up to those beams to relieve tension on the lower structure so that failing materials underneath could be repaired.

If you look closely, you can notice a slight camber (upward arch) to the rails along the inside of the bridge that was not there before it was restored. The tensioning rods have been adjusted, and some were replaced, so the bridge will hopefully keep that camber for many years.

**102nd anniversary celebration**

If you're interested in the history of the bridge and of the Upper Applegate area—or even if you just want to enjoy a family-friendly event with good music, good food, historical displays, vendors, and more—come join us on Saturday, June 8, at the bridge and in the park from 11 am till 3 pm as we celebrate the 102nd anniversary of the bridge.

You can also become a member of the McKee Bridge Historical Society and enjoy various other events that it puts on each year. I've heard a rumor about a possible chili cook-off this year!

If you want to know more about MBHS, call me at 541-846-7501 or email [mckeebridge1917@gmail.com](mailto:mckeebridge1917@gmail.com). The old way still works too: MBHS, PO Box 854, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

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If you look closely at the white rails on the sides of the McKee Bridge, you might be able to see the camber (upward arch). Photo: Paul Tipton.

**Applegate Valley Business Overview (includes nonprofit organizations)**

According to Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and Rural Development Initiative (RDI), there are 425 businesses in the Applegate Watershed with 1,999 employees (4.7 employees/business). The most common category is Services (127 businesses). Others include Construction (73), Retail (67), Agriculture & Mining (36), Manufacturing (35), Unclassified (24), Wholesale Trade (21), Finance (18), Transportation (15), Government (6), Communication (2), and Utility (1).

**New Applegate trail guide**

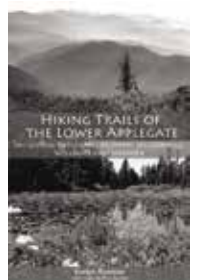
Williams resident Evelyn Roether has published a new trail guide just in time for hiking season. *Hiking Trails of the Lower Applegate* offers descriptions of 20 local hikes ranging from the rugged flanks of Grayback Mountain to easy streamside strolls along Limpy Creek. Beautifully detailed hand-drawn maps by area artist Ann Gunter accompany each trail description, along with photographs of the landscape and local flora.

The 92-page guide begins with an extensive exploration of the natural and cultural history of the Applegate

watershed and includes well researched tidbits on biological diversity, botanical interests, fire ecology, land-management threats, and other curiosities pertaining to the trails. The guide also features several new trails never before written about.

*Hiking Trails of the Lower Applegate* is available at local businesses and at [lowerapplegatetrails.com](http://lowerapplegatetrails.com).

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**Nonprofit organizations in the Applegate Valley are welcome to submit news and event information to the Applegater. Email [gater@applegater.org](mailto:gater@applegater.org).**

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