

## NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS



Applegate School junior varsity Cougars 2019.



Applegate School varsity Cougars 2019.

## Oddfellows, Lions Club donate funds to Applegate School

BY JEAN HALL

Applegate School received some generous donations. The Oddfellows donated \$3,500 to help with the school lunch program, and the Lions Club gave \$500 to the school for athletic equipment. A sincere thanks to both the Oddfellows and the Lions.

Rotary Club of Jacksonville-Applegate named eighth-grader Zeyna DiBiasi and fifth-grader Emary Haning Rotary Students of the Year for Applegate School. Both students attended the Rotary luncheon on February 19. They each gave a speech and received a number of prizes from business members.

Evan Giudici also merits congratulations for winning the Future Chefs competition at Applegate School. He will compete with winners from other schools in a district-wide competition.

Artist Corbin Brashear has returned to Applegate School to help students in each class with a felting project.

Students welcomed Corbin eagerly because they remembered the fun they had last year creating felted friends.

Jennifer Joy continues to bring her animated talent and creativity in music and dance to Applegate students on Friday afternoons. The holiday program provided an opportunity for them to share their new skills.

Mosaic artist Jeremy Criswell will return to Applegate School in late March to complete the beautiful mosaic mural on the outside wall near the gym. Jeremy helped students create all the clay figures that fill the tree and will find a place in the mural's river habitat.

Family Learning Night for Applegate School is March 5.

October was Fire Safety Awareness month. Mrs. Hirschmugl's K-1 class won lunch and a tour at the Applegate Valley Fire District station for turning in the most Home Safety Plans. Students enjoyed pizza with the firefighters,

saw all their equipment, and visited the big rigs.

K-1 students learned to play kazoos and demonstrated their skill at the school's holiday program.

To celebrate learning the alphabet, kindergarteners and first graders made alphabet cookies and spelled their names from cookie dough.

Mrs. Halsted's second and third graders enjoy the advantage of parent volunteers coming to help in the classroom. Corbin Brashear helped students create felt projects. Several parents helped students make homemade masa tortillas. The students especially enjoyed making their own quesadillas.

Mr. Scull's fourth and fifth graders are learning about early European settlements in America and will soon be studying the Constitutional Convention. In science the class will have two special field trips to round out their study of plants, animals, and people in diverse

ecosystems. On one trip students will go to the Table Rocks, and in May they will visit Newport, Oregon.

Valentine's Day called forth the talents of the class as they designed their own Valentine boxes. Fostering further growth in appreciation of art, fourth and fifth graders will have a field trip to the Grants Pass Museum of Art, where they will learn about and view the work of local artists and learn a new artistic technique.

We had a record number of students sign up for basketball this year with 21 athletes. We had two teams with 10 players on the varsity and 11 on our junior varsity team. Both teams had a great year. Thank you to Austin Bristow, head coach, and Ryan Dolan, assistant coach, and to our parents for making this a great season. We couldn't do it without you.

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## New K-12 school proposed in the Applegate Valley

BY AMBER BISHOP

We all know that children are our future, whether we currently have, have had, or have never had children. Children are also our present—affecting the whole community. I am writing this article from the perspective of a parent, local business owner, and a caring member of the community. I thank the *Applegater* for this opportunity to introduce to you a recent initiative to create a new school based in the Applegate.

For our young family, attending a public school daily is just too much, and independently homeschooling isn't quite enough. Without getting into the details of varying educational philosophies, let's just say we are not the only Applegate family looking for an innovative, hybrid approach to education.

The Applegate Valley clearly needs a more centrally located high school. Our kids spend nine-plus hours a day attending Grants Pass or Medford high schools. This arrangement leaves Applegate businesses without entry-level employees and young families without neighborhood babysitters. It also thrusts our young people into the thick of town-life influences while potentially disconnecting them from our community.

Enter Teach-NW, a Virtual STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Academy. The founders of Teach-NW began creating hybrid learning centers in remote Kodiak, Alaska, and have since moved south to Marcola, Oregon. They believe that "21st century skills are not developed in a box" and emphasize performance-based education tailored to each student. At their present home base in Marcola, Teach-NW has purchased a farm for a hands-on education center where kids can learn through doing and attend school with a flexible schedule. Imagine if local kids could complete high school through real-life learning! They could learn math by designing an amendment schedule for a local farm job. They could help conduct a study for effective watershed care through responsible farming practices, and maybe graduate with a welding certificate.

Teach-NW could easily expand their existing program to serve southern Oregon with initially just 25 students. This is what the "virtual" aspect of their charter means—not only that students have the option for online classes, but that the school can serve beyond its geographical base. Students will have

access to all the current offerings: a teacher, support in developing an individualized learning plan, and state education funds to pay for lessons, classes, and books, etc. Already, a group of local parents is working to start a homeschoolers cooperative to support our children and foster community toward the effort.

Eventually, as our local Teach-NW school community grows to surpass 50 students, we can work together to create a truly unique hybrid school with a nearby physical campus. The vision includes generating partnerships between our students and community organizations to come together for real-world learning through relevant hands-on service projects. Because individualized learning to suit each student is the priority, the school will have options for vocational training and basic home-based study. We believe that the possibility of integrated, interdisciplinary, localized learning will truly keep our children motivated.

Innovative local schools are overflowing and carrying wait lists (Ruch, Madrone Trail, LOGOS, etc.). Can a collaboration with Teach-NW help the Applegate Valley take full advantage of today's modern technologies to support

our communities? Will our children benefit from flexible, local, and relevant opportunities for learning? Would our community benefit from our children growing up rooted and connected to their place and neighbors? Will the parents of our children be able to stay more involved in the community under such circumstances? Can you, as a community member with a skill to share or teach, participate in this effort? Of course, I have no crystal ball to see where or how all of this will turn out exactly, but I *do* believe in this project. Does this sound like something you believe in?

Here are a few resources to learn more and keep abreast of the project:

- Teach-NW's website ([marcola.k12.or.us/teach-nw](http://marcola.k12.or.us/teach-nw)). You can also sign up here as a "Vendor" to offer classes and/or services to local students.

- Applegate Valley Learners GROUP. A Facebook group to connect and support *all* Applegate Valley children's education opportunities.

For more information or to join the initiative email list, email me at the address below.

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