



Memories of a fall adventure in the 1950s Applegate Valley

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

The following story was told to me by Dianne Cid, an Applegate resident. She recalls:

I remember the wonderful simmering, sweet smell of blackberries as all us kids helped Mom can them into jam, jelly, and whole berries for pies and cobblers. Ahh, I better tell you the story about those big juicy blackberries.

This story begins with me, almost seven years old, when I helped load our car with containers and picking buckets. We started out early from the Klamath Falls area for our journey to the Applegate River. Our family was Mom, Dad, us four kids, and all our aunts, uncles, and cousins. Off we went like a caravan.

It was a long ride with lots of winding roads. I remember coming down off the Green Springs into a big valley, then heading west to find the Applegate River. We went through an old-fashioned town called Jacksonville, then over a small mountain down into another valley.

Soon we came to Hamilton Road, where the best blackberries were growing on very big bushes that seemed from my view to be almost as tall as the trees. The berries were huge, as big as my dad's thumbs, and oh, so sweet. We parked near a farm with a big white house near the road that had beautiful working horses in the corrals. Then we unloaded the ladders and pails and went to picking blackberries. The men put the ladders up against the bushes, then climbed up and spread ladders, carefully, across the tops of the bushes so as not to crush the fruit. We kids picked from the ground, chanting, "Two in the bucket and one in the mouth," as long as we didn't get caught.

We had spread out along a very long section and couldn't even see each other. But we could talk and laugh while we picked. We were a bit of a distance from the adults, so we could share our funny jokes and kid talk without being corrected for our silly words.

My cousin Billy liked to make funny noises, so when we heard this funny grrrring and grunting noise we all thought Billy was playing a joke on us. He did it again, and we yelled at him to quit trying to scare us.

Suddenly, he came out of the bushes in a different place than the sound had come from. Then my other cousin, Skippy, started screaming and ran out from his



Looking east across the Applegate River toward Hamilton road which runs behind the blackberry bush area. Photo: Janelle Dunlevy.

area scattering blackberries through the air like rain. Adults came running. Suddenly there was loud crashing of bushes and lots of growling!

A huge bear went running away from our screaming, Skippy came screeching and screaming towards us. Then we all started laughing, howling and screaming, which caused more crashing noise as the bear ran further away. I laughed so hard that my side hurt so bad I had to sit down. It was the funniest thing I had seen so far in my lifetime.

After everyone calmed down, we assessed the situation. No one was hurt badly. There were some scratches and scrapes from exiting the bushes so fast, but the worst damage was all the smashed blackberries.

We did have a wonderful picnic on the blankets, and we found a place to put our feet in the river; but we also kept watch for any more bears.

•••

Thanks for sharing, Dianne! We still have a beautiful place to go to the river, where the Buckley family used to let folks come and pick blackberries there by the river on their property. Then later, in the 1960s the Buckleys and several other property owners sold parcels to Jackson County for a park and campground, so lots of folks could enjoy it for years to come.

BLM built the bridge so there could be access to the park on both sides of the river. Let's hope we can keep taking care of this beautiful portion of the river and the park for many more generations to enjoy. Contact me at the email below if you have a good park or local story to share about "days gone by"!

Janis Mohr-Tipton
Chair of the Park Enhancement Program
for A Greater Applegate
janis.agapark@gmail.com,
541-846-7501

Propagation Fair set for March in Williams

BY BRAD SMITH

Growing food is still a good idea today. Television will likely fail to inform you about this.

One promising way to produce food is to plant fruit trees and nut trees. Older trees are amazing. Some, like walnut trees, can produce enormous crops of high-energy food nine out of every ten years, without assistance from humans. It takes attention and care in the first years to establish a non-native tree. Like humans, they enjoy being in a good place and being loved, and they benefit from occasional herbal and microbial supplements, like (compost) tea.

Noted apple grower Nick Botner started his Yoncalla orchard in his 50s and enjoyed it for decades, until his passing in his 90s. It is said that at one point his tree collection had 4,500 apple varieties. Now

you can schedule me to gather them around your existing winter pruning schedule.

I store the cuttings (labeled), with some moisture, sealed in plastic bags in the fridge until spring when the annual Plant Propagation Fairs happen. These free events, also known as "scion-exchanges," traditionally focus on the fruit-tree varieties being shared. Rootstock is sold at these events so you can have a custom tree grafted for you while you watch and ask questions. Apple, pear, plum, grape, and fig are commonly shared here, and there are sometimes plant swaps and workshops and always a seed swap, which may be more of the focus in 2021.

Ecologically social phenomena like this could only be participant-driven. I am looking for new local sources for scion



A typical display at a scion exchange. Each cup contains scion wood of a different fruit tree variety available to take for free. Photo: Brad Smith

it is three thousand something, according to the Temperate Orchard Society, which has been trying to copy the collection for preservation. Many apples and pears make a divine eating experience, yet they don't ship or travel well in big trucks, so we never hear of or see them in the big stores.

This winter, I am collecting cuttings (known as "scion") from anyone willing to share a handful of twigs from healthy, identified trees. If you have good fruit trees or nut trees and are willing to share some cuttings with others, I can help by instructing you, or

and collaborators to help shape this into an awesome tradition. Thank you to everyone who ever has, who ever will, and who does participate in any way. You are all part of the Agrarian Sharing Network.

The local Plant Propagation Fair will be held in Williams, Oregon, on March 14, 2021, at the SCA Pavilion, 206 Tetherow, 11 am-4 pm, rain or shine. Contact me by email (below) and learn more at scionexchange.wordpress.com.

Brad Smith
scion@fastmail.com



Applegate Store & Cafe

Deli & Picnic Supplies
Breakfast • Lunch • To-Go Orders
Gas • ATM • Espresso
Beer & Wine

15095 Hwy 238, Applegate, OR
541-846-6659



Horsefeather Farms Ranchette

Guesthouse Stayovers B&B
13291 Hwy 238, Applegate, OR

Stay at a real country farm on the Applegate River!

Call for information and reservations:
541-941-0000
www.horsefeather-farms-ranchette.com

The owners of Applegate Valley Realty realize that these are extraordinary times and that many among us could use a little help.

We want to do our part, so we are offering \$1000 off our 5% seller's commission until March 2021. Or if the seller also wants to help, we will give the seller \$750, and the Medford Food Bank \$500 (paid at close of escrow).

Stay healthy! We are all in this together!

DONALD TOLLEFSON
PRINCIPAL BROKER/OWNER
(541) 973-9185
DON.AVREALTY@GMAIL.COM



APPLEGATE VALLEY REALTY
HOMES • VINEYARDS • LAND

DEBORAH TOLLEFSON
PRINCIPAL BROKER/OWNER
(541) 973-9184
DEBBIE.AVREALTY@GMAIL.COM