

## NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS

## Applegate School students look forward to 'normality' as school swings back into session

BY JEAN HALL

The new school year, the welcome-back time, at Applegate School began on August 29. Staff and student expectations resound positively. Along with hopes for remaining safe and healthy, all returnees express eagerness to get back to a "normal atmosphere for learning," as second- and third-grade teacher Kellie Halsted stated.

K-1 teacher Karen Hirschmugl voiced a common staff hope for the new year: "to help students feel comfortable, confident, and safe at school, and to be excited about learning."

Before looking ahead to the new year, Mrs. Halsted reported on a happy ending for last term. "K-3 students took a great trip to Wildlife Safari and enjoyed a combined visit to Applegate Valley Fire Station 1 and Applegate branch of Jackson County Library." With the help of parent volunteers, the year ended on a fun last day with water games, snow cones, and the always popular tug-of-war.

This summer's activities at Applegate School included a Critter Camp for incoming Kindergarteners and a STEAM-themed (science, technology, engineering, art and math) summer camp for last year's first-through-fifth graders during the week of August 15. Leading the Critter Camp, Karen Hirschmugl reported on its purpose and process. "We mainly focused on the social/emotional being of each child. The kids were introduced to the classroom and school. They were exposed to simple procedures and routines with a focus on art and books. Each day we read a book by Eric Carle and incorporated art, math and literature into each book. Every day each child received a book to take home."

As Applegate School welcomes students back for a new year, it seems important to hear from some of them. Aly and Austin Soberanes both responded with eagerness about returning to school. First-grader Aly said she was looking forward "to seeing her teacher and friends." Austin, in third grade, stated simply, "I am excited for reading, recess, and friends." Both Aly and Austin are happily anticipating learning more math this year.

Three eighth-graders described their hopes and expectations. Ursus Moeves said, "For the new school year I am looking forward most to sports, seeing friends, and getting better at sports." In a practical vein, David Cross stated, "My hope for the new school year in eighth grade is that we have lockers, so we don't have to carry around all our stuff." David also expressed his hope to see and meet new people. Fellow eighth-grader Hamza diBiasi responded, "My hopes for the new school year are that we will learn a lot more and also get to be a lot more open about masks and all that."



Releasing a Monarch butterfly at Applegate School in 2014 is Johanna DeVos (who graduated from Hidden Valley High School in 2022). Photo: Linda Kappen.

When asked what they looked forward to learning this year, Ursus replied, "I am looking forward to social studies because I like learning about the past and how the world evolves." Both David and Hamza are eager to continue their accelerated math program, which placed them in eighth-grade math in seventh grade. David is happy to know, "I will be doing ninth-grade geometry," and Hamza added, "I am excited about that."

Besides the Applegate School staff welcoming back students and students welcoming new opportunities to learn, Linda Kappen continues her 21-year program of involving students in welcoming monarch butterflies. "In 2002 we had our first monarch visits, and from then on, we have responsibly raised monarchs for science study before releasing them on the school grounds."

Every year Linda sees that K-3 students have their own rearing enclosure in the classroom so they can observe the life cycles of the monarchs. Linda also oversees the planting of milkweeds in a pollinator garden. Currently, Linda has monarch caterpillars in the "monarch lab" in the art room.

Linda and her students grow milkweeds for sale to help support the growth of Asclepias seeds, the planting and care of the pollinator garden, and the program for the care and protection of the monarch butterflies.

An enormous outpouring of gratitude is due to Linda for her commitment and dedication to the support of the monarch butterflies and for all her efforts to involve the students at Applegate School in the project.

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## Building our learning community, one student at a time

BY JULIE BARRY

As defined by the Oregon Department of Education: "Community schools work with families, students, teachers, and community organizations to identify the unmet needs of students



and families and develop a plan to leverage community resources to address these needs in the school building, turning schools into community hubs. Full-service community school approaches can bring needed support for students and families into our public schools, such as before- and after-school programs, health and social services, and other comprehensive services. They can therefore help ensure that no child's opportunities are determined by their zip code, family's income, race/ethnicity, disability status, or other factors. Research shows that evidence-based approaches to community schools can improve student social, emotional, and academic outcomes."

Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS) has been operating as a community school since its inception in 1914. However, in the last 10 years, efforts have been intentional with increasing the efficacy of the school to assist the community at large in its health and wellness and to offer the children of the valley opportunities to engage as stewards. We are so proud of the work of the past and look forward with excitement to the opportunities that lie before us as we embark on the 2022-23 school year.

The summer was met with preparation and celebration as we brought back our annual dinner and auction. This year Quady North Winery hosted the event, and all attendees remarked about what an amazing night it was. All the proceeds from the event go

to ROCS and the programs offered to its students. We are so grateful for the folks at Quady North and their dedication to the school.

Our summer school program included activities at Cantrall Buckley

Park, Applegate River Lavender, Ruch Public Library, and White Oak Farm. We are so humbled by the engagement of all these folks with the students and their dedication in making sure the time spent was relevant, inspiring, and fun!

RVHPA (Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and Paragliding) once again donated profits from their successful Applegate Open to ROCS! Thank you to the flyers, organizers, and all others that played a part in the highly anticipated event.

With all of our community partnerships, Ruch Outdoor Community School offers its students opportunities to achieve more by ensuring that they are physically, emotionally, and socially supported to learn. The school serves as a community hub by providing access to such critical programs and services as health care, mentoring, expanded learning programs, adult education, and other services that support the whole child, engage families, and strengthen the entire community. We are excited for NEW programs this year!

To all of our business partnerships and those that engage with Ruch Outdoor Community School, *we thank you!* It is because of your involvement that this school remains strong, sustainable, and highly sought after by so many families inside and outside of our area. *Go Cougars!!*

Julie Barry  
Principal

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## WOODLAND CHARTER SCHOOL

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### ANNUAL FILM SERIES & FUNDRAISER

Focusing on Outdoor Education

This year we will have 2 short films and a panel of Outdoor Education Professionals discuss what has been coined, "Nature Deficit Disorder"

The event will be held on 9/14/22 @ Valley View Winery. We will be posting more information on our website, Facebook Page and the Applegate Connect Calendar.

[www.applegatepartnership.org/upcoming-events](http://www.applegatepartnership.org/upcoming-events)  
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