

**ASK THE GATER**



A photo of Williams Creek taken by Jeremy Hager in November 2021.

## Are there any good stories behind the names of Applegate tributaries?

BY LISA E BALDWIN

A person cannot travel very far in the Applegate without encountering a road named after a creek—Thompson Creek, Nine Mile Creek, Butcherknife Creek—and the stories behind the names are sometimes surprising, sometimes exactly what one might expect, and nearly always rooted in pioneer history.

From the uppermost reaches of the watershed to the bottomland just above the Applegate’s confluence with the Rogue, two creeks, Sterling and Slate, are seemingly named for the mining resources extracted from them. While that is true for Slate Creek, Sterling Creek is actually named after a man, James Sterling, who mined for gold (not silver) on the creek in the 1850s. Many of our creeks are named after the men who came to the Applegate area in the mid-1800s to mine, such as Jim Carberry who established a placer mine in 1854 on the stream now known as Carberry Creek, or to farm, such as Conrad Slagle who took a land grant claim in 1858 on the creek that now bears his name. Conrad Slagle is buried in the Sparlin Cemetery on Williams Creek.

Williams Creek is one Applegate tributary that is not named after a miner or a farmer. It was named for Captain Robert Williams, a well-known fighter in the Rogue River Indian War. Capt. Williams gained fame after fighting Dagelema people (“River Takelma”) and Dakubetede people (Applegate Athapascan) on the creek in 1853. The towns and post offices—Williams, Williams Creek, and Williamsburg—were named after

the creek. Very few geographic names now in common use in the Applegate watershed are the names used by the indigenous people.

A couple of our creeks have names that hint at more colorful stories, like Bull Creek and Humbug Creek. The story behind Humbug Creek tells of a quarrel over a mining claim. Humbug is an old-fashioned term for deceptive or dishonest behavior or a person who behaves as a fraud or imposter. The names of the miners involved in this particular humbug are lost, but the humbug itself is memorialized. It is impossible to know the true story of how our Bull Creek was named. One account tells of a large bull elk that frequented the drainage and successfully evaded hunters year after year. Another version attributes the name to the large population of noisy bull frogs in the area. Yet another points to an unnamed miner, who having exhausted his patience, said the idea of pulling gold from the creek was a “load of bull.”

The Applegate River is 51 miles long, fed by numerous streams and creeks whose names carry pieces of our history; some others are so small and seasonal they remain unmapped and unnamed, but every trickle contributes to making the Applegate the largest tributary of the world-famous Rogue River, and the best place to call home.

Lisa E Baldwin  
leb.97527@gmail.com

*Have a question about the Applegate Valley? Ask the Gater! Send your query to leb.97527@gmail.com.*

### Food Pantry is here to help

Come to the back of Ruch Outdoor Community School at 156 Upper Applegate Road from 11:30 am - 1 pm Mondays and go home with food when you need it. [accesshelps.org](http://accesshelps.org) • 541-899-6980

## ••• BIZBITS •••

### Pennington Farms’ Country Bakery

has long been a favorite of locals and in-the-know regular visitors. This is especially true around the winter holidays. When you stop by to pick up pies for your holiday gatherings, check out the new pavilion with plentiful outdoor seating for warmer days. Cathy Pennington also wants folks to know about their prepackaged gifts available in the store for “grab-and-go giving” and through their online store “for shipping Oregon



Cathy Pennington. Photo: Lisa Baldwin.

love across the country.” The Penningtons grow all their own fruit and use it in their baked goods and jams. “We grow it, we pick it, we bake it, we make it,” Cathy says. “The farm...that’s what makes our products extra special and unique to our valley.”

Shop the Pennington Farm website ([pennington.farm](http://pennington.farm)) where you will find gift boxes of jams, pastries, cookies, honeys, syrups, and more. The hardest part of your holiday gift shopping will be deciding which of the mouthwatering made-from-scratch treats you will choose to share with loved ones, near and far. A visit to Pennington Farms should definitely be near the top of your to-do list in the busy months of December and January. The Country Bakery is on Williams Highway (Highway 238) between Murphy and Provolt.

Open 9 am-5 pm Monday through Friday; 10 am-4 pm Saturday; closed Sundays. 11341 Williams Highway, Murphy. 541-846-0550

Lisa E Baldwin • [leb.97527@gmail.com](mailto:leb.97527@gmail.com)

BizBits highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone. Email [gater@applegater.org](mailto:gater@applegater.org).

### ■ APPLGATE LODGE

*Continued from page 1*

and they will still support Applegate nonprofit fundraising efforts.

“Joanna has built an incredible community,” Mike says. He and Anna want to continue that legacy.

“Joanna has been a gem in the transition to new ownership,” Anna says. She and Mike are grateful to be leaning on her experience, knowledge, and wisdom, especially with weddings.

Of course, though, things won’t just trundle along as before. Mike and Anna are also enthusiastic about changes they might make, from tearing out carpeting to having cooperative relationships with Applegate wineries. “The theme at the lodge will be wine-centric,” Anna says, envisioning a shuttle from the lodge to the wineries, weekend brunches for wine-tasting parties, wine-focused dinners to show off specific wines, and rooms of the inn named after varietals of grapes grown in the Applegate.

Anna and Mike also want to make the lodge family-friendly with swings for the kids and lawn games. Mike imagines other scenes: guests reading a book by the fire, a group of women at the lodge for a “girls’ wine-tasting weekend.”

“We want to make coming to the lodge an experience,” Anna says. For instance, she sees the lodge offering something similar to the farm-to-table meal she and Mike experienced in Greece. She envisions their own large garden providing the produce.

Anna and Mike want to bring the lodge up to date and give it new energy and a fresh image. To that end, they will no longer call it the Applegate Lodge but will give it a new, as yet undetermined, name. They will revitalize the restaurant, hiring a chef (they hope to find someone local) and changing the menu, keeping it similar to the past menu but with their own flavors and touches, perhaps using dishes from wine regions around the world.

“We plan to bring back the quality of the food,” Mike says, remembering meals he has had at the lodge in the past.

Mike, who, like Anna, loves to entertain, will run the restaurant with Anna’s brother, Kelley Beck, a third owner. Anna will run the lodge. “There will be a focus on weddings,” she says, “and we’ve already booked two big Christmas parties.”

For the time being, Mike and Anna (and the children) will commute to the Applegate from Medford. Mike’s father will live at the lodge. Mike will continue with his current job, but Anna is giving up her job as a bookkeeper so she can work full-time running the lodge. Opening date under new management is February 2, 2023.

“We would love to invite everyone out,” Mike says.

And “everyone,” no doubt, would love to come out—to meet the new owners and experience the new Applegate River Lodge and Restaurant, whatever its new name.


Diana Coogle  
[diana@applegater.org](mailto:diana@applegater.org)

*Happy holidays to one and all from the Applegater!*

**Ramsay Realty**  
The Applegate Jacksonville Experts  
[www.ramsayrealty.com](http://www.ramsayrealty.com)

**I Know Your Neighborhood**

17 Years of Experience!  
**Jayda Wood** Principal Broker  
[jayda@ramsayrealty.com](mailto:jayda@ramsayrealty.com)  
541-973-9105

**RISE UP!**  
- ARTISAN BREAD -

“Thanks for loving the bread, Applegate!”



**Pegasus Sound Therapy**  
PEGGY LEVITON, MM, CERTIFIED  
Jacksonville, OR  
707-382-8641  
Individual Sessions • Acoustic Modalities