

Don't miss the Applegate Water Security Education event

BY JIM REILAND

Spring finally arrived in April, wresting the Applegate Valley landscape from winter's icy fingers later than usual. While it felt like a long, cold, and wet winter, parts of the Applegate Valley are actually below normal precipitation. This has implications for irrigation water availability, well recharge, soil moisture conditions, the start of fire season, and more.

Drought seems to have become a constant condition, and long-term trends indicate that it's here to stay. Watching our forested hillsides lose many of the more vulnerable trees, facing the uncertainty of water availability for irrigation, and wondering if this is the summer the well may finally dry up have become annual worries. Praying for miracles and doing rain dances are welcome, but there are other actions we can take to become more resilient as we try to make do with less.

A Greater Applegate (AGA) and the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC) are hosting an all-day Water Security Education event on Saturday, June 17, at the Applegate Fire District training hall in Ruch (1095 Upper Applegate Road) from 10 am-4 pm. Arrive by 9:30 am for coffee and mingling!

We'll start with a "big picture" view by Shavon Haynes, Oregon Water Resources Department District 13 watermaster, who will describe water use in rural southern Oregon and help frame the conversation about how we can achieve water security faced with today's challenges.

Everyone who lives in the Applegate has a well, a yard, and a house with kitchens, baths, showers, and toilets. Kora Mousseaux, Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District's community water resource conservationist, will talk about household and residential landscape water conservation measures—things you can do to reduce the amount of water you use.

Many of us have gardens and orchards, and quite a few are farming and ranching

on a larger scale. Gordon Jones, Oregon State University Extension Service assistant professor, will cover irrigation management and water conservation practices for southern Oregon crops and pastures.

All of us have household water that is suitable for reuse. After lunch (provided), Pat Heins, with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, will talk about gray water. He'll cover what's involved in permitting and setting up a gray-water system using water from baths and washing machines to irrigate landscapes.

Roarke Ball of Roarke's Earthworks, an Applegate-based contractor, will describe the how-tos of building a pond to retain water.

And if you have a roof on your property, you can collect rainwater! Retired contractor Jim Reiland will offer an overview of rainwater catchment systems design and installation, illustrated by a variety of Applegate and Rogue Valley projects.

AGA's Megan Fehrman and AWPC's Janelle Dunlevy will wrap up the day with a conversation about local irrigation, from the tributaries to the main stem Applegate. As we move forward, living in drought conditions, can water-rights holders work more closely, communicate more frequently, and improve antiquated delivery systems to help make water go further for its patrons and the environment? This conversation will provide the groundwork for a larger workshop for local irrigators in the fall of 2023.

Please join us to learn more about water use in the Applegate and what you can do to conserve. Cost for the day (includes lunch!) is \$15. Register online at agreaterapplegate.networkforgood.com/events/56461-applegate-water-security-education-event. Contact me if you have any questions.

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Join us at the SFI Birds & Brews

BY CHRISTINE LAZINA

Nothing says summer like enjoying live music and a cold drink in the sunshine with your friends, family, and neighbors. So don't miss the Siskiyou Field Institute's (SFI) annual festival and fundraiser, Birds & Brews! Join us 1-6 pm Saturday, June 3, for an afternoon of live bluegrass, folk, and rock music, local craft beers and wines on tap, food, live bird presentations, guided birding hikes, kids' activities, and community camaraderie on the SFI grounds in Selma.

We're excited to welcome to the stage this year the Brothers Reed, Michal Palzewicz, and the Lynx Family Band! The Brothers Reed are well-known throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond for bringing incredible harmonies and a genuine brotherly spirit to their repertoire of original bluegrass and folk music, presented with a modern edge and infectious energy. Michal Palzewicz is a cellist and composer who creates expressive and dynamic pieces, drawing inspiration from nature as well as the human experience. And the Lynx Family Band is a true family of multitalented singer-songwriters, with an easy west-coast-vibe-meets-bluesy-southern-rock sound.

When you're not relaxing on the lawn watching the show, there will be plenty of activities for both adults and kids to enjoy. Wildlife Images will be visiting with some

wildlife ambassadors, including owls and other bird species, and will be leading owl pellet dissections. Enjoy birding hikes along SFI's creeks and woodlands, guided by local experts; kids' puppet shows; face painting; and more.

A nonprofit for over 20 years, SFI takes as its mission to increase the understanding of, and connection to, the Klamath-Siskiyou ecoregion through education, scientific research, and public engagement. We are proud to offer high-quality programming for all ages. SFI provides a wide variety of field courses on topics from marine biology to mushrooms to rare plants. We also facilitate researchers and other academic groups during the field season. Our location allows all students and scholars immediate access to the world-famous serpentinite and old-growth forests of the Klamath-Siskiyou. Appealing to kids in our community, curious teens, developing professionals, or lifelong learners, there's something for everyone at the SFI.

You can find all the details on Birds & Brews, including the music and activity schedule, at thesfi.org, or look for the Birds & Brews event on our Facebook page.

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Follow the Southern Oregon Lavender Trail this summer

BY SUE OWEN

The Southern Oregon Lavender Trail is a scenic (and aromatic) route that winds through the stunning landscapes and vineyards of the wider Applegate Valley. The trail is an ideal summer destination for nature enthusiasts, lavender lovers, local wine buffs, and anyone looking to escape the hustle and bustle of city life. Most farms are open Friday to Sunday from mid-June to the end of July, and some are also open on Mondays (and some still have blooms in early August). Check farm websites for up-to-date opening details.

The lavender trail begins in the charming town of Jacksonville. Dos Mariposas Vineyard and Lavender, located just outside the city on Bellinger Lane, hosts great live music regularly in their tasting room and are very child friendly. The OSU Lavender Garden is also located in Jacksonville on Hanley Road and is open daily for self-guided tours. From there, the trail leads to several lavender farms in the Applegate Valley and beyond, each offering a unique experience.

The Applegate River Lavender Farm, just outside the town of Ruch, is set right on the waterfront and has a lovely gift shop full of lavender products. Moving on from there, Kingfisher Lavender Farm planted 21 different varieties of lavender on Upper Applegate Road in 2022. Their farm is still in its infancy, but they offer beautiful cut flowers and lavender gifts. The English Lavender Farm, on Thompson Creek Road, in Applegate, features beautiful views of the surrounding mountains, and the sight of their rows of blooming lavender is breathtaking. Essential oil is distilled in their drying barn daily, and they offer many lavender-related classes.

The next stop on the trail is Goodwin Creek Gardens, in Williams, which grows many varieties of lavender and other plants from their beautiful nursery. Last, but by no means least, is Lavender Ally in Rogue River. There the owners have created a very pretty, circular lavender garden with over 20 varieties of lavender, and they make specialty teas and other handmade lavender products.

Together these family-owned farms offer visitors the chance to explore the fields, take memorable photos, pick your own lavender bundle, take part in wreath- or wand-making classes, participate in a lavender distilling workshop, or just to



Basket of freshly picked lavender at the English Lavender Farm in Applegate.

enjoy a glass of local wine or lavender lemonade. Each destination also has a gift shop where visitors can purchase a variety of lavender products, and each will be happy to talk about the history of their farm and their lavender journey, offering helpful hints and tips on growing and pruning your own lavender at home.

In addition to the lavender farms, the lavender trail takes in several other local attractions. Both Applegate Valley and Jacksonville wineries are working closely with the lavender trail, and some farms are offering lavender food pairings with local wines, a great way to sample flavors that might be new to you. Also on the trail you will find baked goods at Pennington Farms, handmade chocolates at Super Natural Chocolate, great food at the Lindsay Lodge (try their pisco sour with lavender) and Applegate Country Club, pear cider at the new tasting room for Blossom Barn Cidery, a variety of tasty essentials at the Provolt Store, and apple cider from Apple Outlaw (they even make a lavender cider!).

Overall, the Southern Oregon Lavender Trail is a unique and memorable experience for anyone looking to immerse themselves in the beauty and tranquility of the region and to sample some of the local delights that the Applegate has to offer.

For further information, visit southernoregonlavendertrail.com.

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Legal complaint filed against Applegate Valley Historical Society

BY BARBARA NIEDERMEYER

The Applegate Valley Historical Society (AVHS) has been issued a court summons and complaint from the landowner whose property borders the museum property at 15050 Highway 238, across from the Applegate Store. The landowner wants to take the land back because they are under the mistaken impression that AVHS no longer exists. Until this issue is resolved, the AVHS building will remain where it is.

The old building is 18 feet by 18 feet, made of hand-hewn timbers. Located about 1.3 miles down North Applegate Road, it was operated as a general store on the William Pernoll estate in the 1860s, until a new store was built on the corner of North Applegate and Highway 238.

In the late 1970s, Fred West, owner of the Pernoll property, gave the building to



The Applegate Valley Historical Society building on Highway 238 in Applegate.

George McUne, who relocated it to his Pioneer Village, a sort of living history museum in Jacksonville. When Pioneer Village closed in 1985, the building was declared surplus. It was then that

See AVHS, page 7.