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Celebrating  
~29~  
Years

## Applegate fire district board approves need for continued local levy and small increase

BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, APPLLEGATE VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

During the recent board meeting of the Applegate Valley Fire District (AVFD), the board discussed proposed ideas for the option levy that is soon to expire. Because AVFD has a very low tax base, this levy has been essential to our ability to provide 24-hour emergency coverage since 1998. The levy has been overwhelmingly supported by voters in the past.



The board proposed several options for a continuation of the levy and ultimately decided to focus on priority goals for future fire prevention for the AVFD and reduced response times for the west end of the service area. That area comprises North Applegate Road, Thompson Creek Road, Provolt, Kubli Road, and Humbug Creek areas, as well as a number of other roads. Several years ago, AVFD placed housing at Station 51 on North Applegate Road, but has found it difficult to adequately staff the station with volunteers or students. A continuation of the levy, with a small increase, will provide 24-hour coverage—not only at the headquarters station, but also for the west end of the AVFD at Station 51.

At the meeting, the board considered funding needs, position needs, grants received, and future direction. Our staff has done an amazing job by achieving a substantial number of grants. However, these grants require a “match,” are of limited duration, and come with restrictions on the use of funds. On the other hand, the levy provides a minimal amount of matching funds for an extreme gain. Without this match, we actually go backward and lose 24-hour emergency response staffing, instead of gaining increased service for our patrons.

AVFD also provided information on funding a fire prevention-fire marshal position. In the recent past, the fire chief, operations chief, and office manager have been assigned responsibilities related to fire prevention. With these people already highly tasked with other responsibilities, it

See FIRE LEVY, page 11.

## Crooked Barn Vineyards offers straight-up great wine

BY DIANA COOGLE

Atop the bar of Crooked Barn Vineyards’s new wine-tasting room sit four bottles of Crooked Barn wine with medals around their necks: two merlots (2019 and 2020) with silver medals from the Savor Northwest Competition in Washington and a 2019 cabernet franc and a 2019 cabernet sauvignon, silver-medal winners from the 2022 Oregon Wine Competition in Jacksonville. (Just in: Four silver medals for their wines from the 2023 Oregon Wine Experience!)



The crooked barn after which Crooked Barn Vineyards was named. Photo: Diana Coogle.

Heidi and Marcos Martins’s wines are all Bordeaux-style reds because “we love those varietals and want to produce

a good line of wine in that style before adding others,” Heidi says. (Sauvignon blanc is next.)

They harvest their grapes manually and tend the vines themselves. Marcos himself

See CROOKED BARN, page 15.



Overlooking RiverCrest Ranch vineyard from the wine bistro. Photo: Cathy Rodgers.

## A rosé by any other name

BY CATHY RODGERS

As we leave the dog days of summer and look ahead to this year’s upcoming fall vineyard harvest, reflections of our abundant spring continue to tickle our sensibilities. With the river still running clear and cool, wildlife frolicking in the sun’s warmth, lavender in a colorful uproar, one might say of this year’s growing season, “Everything’s coming up rosé.”



Red Lily Vineyards Lily Girl rosé was named after the winemaker’s daughter, Lily.

Local vineyards producing a bouquet that has never smelled so sweet and our winemakers creating breathtaking, distinct rosés that reflect the essence of the Applegate (aromas of the valley’s fresh fruit) and celebrate the pink hues of the salmon that run in our river—

pink wine with a distinct expression and a fruit-forward persistence, a wine that is food-friendly and the perfect anytime wine. The “Lily Girl” rosé label features a drawing of their dog by Rachael’s daughter, at age eight. Like time in a bottle, Lily,

it’s the Applegate at its finest, especially when looked at through rosé-colored glasses.

Rachael Martin, owner of Red Lily Vineyards, has been producing rosé wines since 2010, when rosés were just coming to market. Her pursuit of the perfect rosé was not just a solution to a red not yet ready, but a showcase of Red Lily’s tempranillo. Rachael was crafting an alluring, pale

See ROSÉ, page 2.

## Ice cream, beer, and gas—too much to ask?

BY JAMES “BUCK” REINDERS



The Applegate Store and Cafe has sold! With so much potential, it seems we’ve all dreamed up possibilities for the site. Some dream big: a community market with fresh produce and flowers, a town square of seasonal abundance, more baked goods! Others simply want the bare essentials.

Well, the new managers of the property, Jeff and Elise Higley, owners of Oshala Farm in the Applegate Valley, have been dreaming too. With funding from long-

time friends, they are excited for the chance to meet the town’s needs, big or small, and to get their family working together in new ways.

In our next issue, we’ll introduce them, their plans, and invite our readers to give them some feedback. They asked for it.

And I’ll make sure they don’t forget the ice cream.

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