

Cozy up and craft

Wild and Woolly winter felting coming to the Applegate

BY CORBIN BRASHEAR

Our dark, rainy Applegate winters are a fabulous season to cozy up in front of a warm fire with a craft project like needle felting. Needle felting uses a special type of needle to sculpt wool into a three-dimensional form. It can also be used to create two-dimensional paintings with wool. It is an incredibly forgiving and creatively rewarding art form that requires few supplies. You can create your own adorable sculptures in a few short hours. It's a great craft for makers-at-heart with "artist's block," who wish to be creative but don't know where to start.

If you are looking for a new creative outlet or have always wanted to try needle felting and want some in-person instruction, you are in luck this winter! As a local fiber artist (from Williams) with Wild and Woolly Feltworks, I am excited to offer several needle-felting workshops this winter, including January workshops at Dorothy Gales Event Centre in Williams and The Miners' Bazaar in Jacksonville, and some Felt and Sips at local wineries. These workshops will provide the felting fundamentals and confidence you need to strike out on your own felting adventures in front of your own cozy woodstove.



Needle-felted Santa and friends
by Corbin Brashear.

I have been creating mixed-media needle-felted sculptures, tapestries, and needle-felted designed clothing since 2003. I exhibit my work at the Oregon Country Fair and many other regional art shows and galleries and have been leading felting workshops and retreats for over 15 years as an artist in the schools and at the Grants Pass Museum of Art, Southern Oregon Guild of Artists, Ashland Art Center, and Ashland's current Fiber Art Collective, Mendocino Art Center, and many other galleries all over northern California and Oregon. You can see my work at wildandwoolyfelt.com.

If you would like more information about upcoming workshops or to be on the mailing list, please email me at wildandwoolyfeltworks@gmail.com.

You can see Wild and Woolly Feltworks creations and the work of other wonderful local artists at Pacifica Winter Arts Festival on December 2-3, Lithia Artisans Holiday Market at the Medford Armory on December 16-17, and at Dorothy Gales Holiday Artisan Market on December 23.

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Welcome to the Applegater's newest board member, Laura Duey

BY DIANA COOGLE

It is an understatement to say I was pleased when Laura Duey approached me last month, cautiously, with a suggestion that she might be able to ease the treasurer's duties by taking over some of the tasks until we find a replacement.

And it is no overstatement to say I was overjoyed when, meeting with me and Barbara Holiday at the GoodBean the other day, she said, well, maybe she could join the board in the position of secretary.

One, two, three, done! I am pleased to welcome our newest board member and current secretary, Laura Duey.

Laura gave three reasons for wanting to join the board: (1) When she and her husband, Al, moved here seven years ago from a small town in Vermont, they fell in love with the Applegate, with its "beautiful scenery and eclectic population." (2) She loves the *Applegater*, which she thinks is an "amazing, wonderful newspaper." (3) Serving on the board of the *Applegater* gives her a chance to be involved in community activities.

Laura is no stranger to community involvement. In Vermont she served on several volunteer boards, including those of a tiny 100-year-old library, the local chamber of commerce, and a children's theater. Like the *Applegater* board, these were all very hands-on groups, necessitating all the normal activities of small nonprofit boards: fundraising, writing grants, organizing events, dealing with problems and issues, etc. She was especially closely involved with the



Laura Duey, on the deck
of her home in Ruch.

children's theater, helping publish the programs, among other tasks.

As a "detail-oriented person," Laura brings a valuable perspective to our board. She wants things to be exact. "I am a stickler for details," she cautions, calling this characteristic a "downside." "I am likely to irritate other board members with sentences that begin with 'the rule is...,' or 'the deadline is...,' or 'we said we would...'"

Wonderful, from my perspective. Thank goodness. I welcome that kind of backup to my duties as chair.

Welcome to the board, Laura. We are lucky you chose the *Applegater* for your volunteer energy, as board member, as secretary, and as help with treasurer's duties.

Diana Coogle, Chair
Applegater Board of Directors
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Low-flow sprinklers in Ashland Creek Park help conserve water.

Attend the water security education event in February 2024

Learn how to stretch your water

BY JIM REILAND

Historically, the Applegate Valley will have received about half of its annual seasonal precipitation by January 1. The total amount varies widely across the valleys and hillsides that comprise our community—some of us might record as little as 15 inches of precipitation, while others get well over 30 inches when our rainy season ends in late spring. By mid-winter we're either anxious or hopeful—anxious to catch up or hoping to stay above average. Either way, the total amount of rain and snow we receive has implications for the dry season that is still many months away.

With good information and planning we can stretch our water farther and, perhaps, tap new sources. We can find ways to become more resilient.

All-day education event

A Greater Applegate (AGA) and the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC) are hosting an all-day Water Security Education event from 10 am-4 pm Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Applegate Valley Fire District training hall, 1095 Upper Applegate Road, Ruch. (This event was rescheduled from June 2023.)

Arrive by 9:30 am for coffee and mingling! We'll start with a big-picture view by a speaker from the Oregon Water Resources Department (aka "watermaster's office"), who will describe water use in rural southern Oregon and help frame the conversation about how we can achieve water security in the face of today's challenges.

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

Many of us have gardens and orchards, and quite a few of us are farming and ranching on a larger scale. Paul DeMaggio is the soil and water conservation engineer at JSWCD. His presentation will focus on water resource management, farm irrigation system improvements, and best practices for managing agricultural water quality.

After lunch, Karen Taylor of Siskiyou Permaculture will discuss gray-water site assessment, permits, and codes for Oregon, then review laundry-to-landscape and branched-drain gray-water systems.

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

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

AGA's Megan Fehrman and APWC's Janelle Dunlevy will wrap up the day with a conversation about local irrigation—from the tributaries to the main stem Applegate River.

As we move forward while living in drought conditions, can water-rights holders work more closely, communicate more frequently, and improve antiquated delivery systems to help make water go farther for its patrons and the environment? This conversation will provide the groundwork for a larger workshop for local irrigators in 2024.

Please join us to learn more about water use in the Applegate and what you can do to conserve. This event includes lunch and costs only \$15. Register at A Greater Applegate at agreaterapplegate.org.

Contact me at 541-899-1166 or jim@manyhandsbuilders.com if you have any questions.

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A 10,000-gallon rainwater collection system.

