

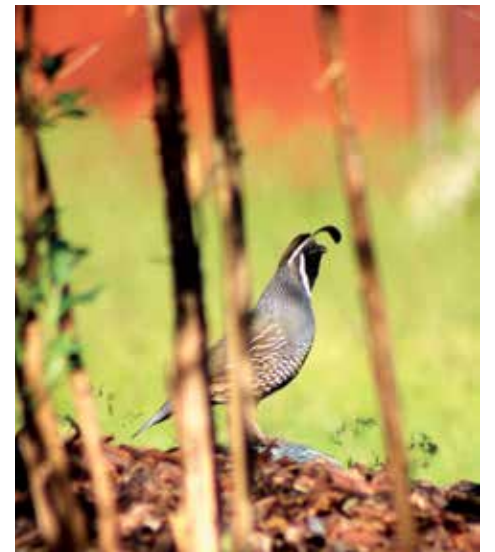
THEY LIVE AMONG US



Brighton Gradisar skimming across the pool for the Got Guts Pond Skim at Mt. Ashland, April 13, 2024, which he won.



Brighton Gradisar at his middle-school graduation from ROCS, in the rhinestone-studded outfit he made and wore again at the Pond Skim on Mt. Ashland.



Quail on a rock wall. Photo: Brighton Gradisar.

Brighton Gradisar: Skier, photographer, Boy Scout, and social media guru

BY DIANA COOGLE

In the video, 14-year-old Brighton Gradisar skis fast down Mt. Ashland, then skims right across a small pool of water as though he were still on snow. The rhinestones he sewed onto his tuxedo jacket sparkle. His helmet is hot-glued onto his hat, which he has also decorated with rhinestones. It's no wonder he won Mt. Ashland's 2024 Pond Skim competition, which leans heavily on both skiing skill and sartorial creativity.



Brighton Gradisar, a community-minded young man with Eagle Scout as a near-term goal. Photo: Brighton Gradisar.

than Facebook and suggested we could announce our events with posters.

Brighton has been in Boy Scouts since second grade and aspires to the highest rank, the Eagle Scout. He especially enjoys the troop's community-service projects, such as Jacksonville Cemetery cleanup and playing Bingo with the residents of Pioneer Village. He also enjoys the outdoor activities

of Scouting. This summer his troop will do a six-day, 50-mile backpacking trip in the Wallowa Mountains of Eastern Oregon, led by Scoutmaster Matt Patten.

Hiking dovetails nicely with photography because what Brighton most likes to photograph is birds. The bird feeders at his house provide opportunities for photography, but he also likes to ride his ATV to more remote places and then walk to find birds he might capture with his camera. His favorite of the pictures

Skiing is the favorite of Brighton's four top activities: skiing, photography, Scouts, and working in social media.

It was his experience as social media manager for his Boy Scout troop that prompted Brighton to contact the *Applegater*, suggesting that we have an Instagram account.

"It's a great way for a larger audience to get connected to the *Applegate*," he told us. He thinks it's easier to use

parts of speech." His least favorite subject is science, which he finds not as engaging as he would like.

Certain sports, however, do engage him. He runs the 800-meter, competes in cross-country, and swims. It's the "push of racing" that he likes, "the effort to do your best." He was captain of the cross-country and track teams at ROCS and continues to run on those teams at South Medford now.

It is no surprise to learn that Brighton has participated in the leadership training offered at Pacifica. He will help fifth and sixth graders with outdoor education this summer. "I'll be teaching them team bonding and plant, animal, and bird identification," he says.

Future plans

As for the future, Brighton hopes to join the Mt. Ashland ski patrol next year. He would like to major in communications in college and, after graduation, travel in Europe, if his pocketbook allows. He looks forward to connecting travel with his love of photography and skiing.

Brighton is sure he will come back to the *Applegate* to live. "I grew up here," he says. "I have connections and am well rooted in the area. I feel comfortable about living where I live."

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Williams Cub Scout Pack 238 celebrates National Public Lands Day

The Williams Cub Scout Pack 238 joined several other scouts from the area to celebrate National Public Lands Day on April 13 at the Provolt Recreation Site. With shovels, rakes, and wheelbarrows, the scouts did an incredible job of adding mulch to the trails. Some of the older scouts went across the road to help pull some old posts.

The Williams pack, co-ed and open to kids from kindergarten through fifth grade, is sponsored by Williams American Legion Post 50, which chartered the pack and also houses its monthly meetings. If you have a skill to share, are seeking a volunteer opportunity, or are interested in joining our pack, please reach out to Pack Leader Rachael Couch at 480-540-4486.





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