

NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS

A season of learning at Applegate School

BY RENEE GOURLEY

Spring sets things abuzz at Applegate School. We are halfway through the school year. The kids are busy little bees. The kindergarteners and first-grade students are counting the days till the 100th-day-of-school celebration. The end of the second quarter is a great time to reflect on the first half of the year and celebrate the growth students have made.


Around Thanksgiving, the kindergarteners and first graders reflected on their gratitude for family, friends, food, and school. The holiday season was full of crafts, the whole-school Christmas program, and other activities. This year, the Christmas program was extra special because it was a short play written by a group of our middle-school students. This heartwarming story about family incorporated popular Christmas songs sung by each classroom. Families and other guests sang together at the end of the program and enjoyed a holiday lunch with the children afterward.

Around Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in January, second- and third-grade students learned about Dr. King's life and talked about their own dreams and goals.

It is amazing to watch the students expand their knowledge through hands-on learning! Second- and third-grade students learned about different types of weather and made clouds in a bottle during garden club. They learned how airplanes fly and made their own paper airplanes, using the scientific method to design and test them, and making changes to see if they could make them fly better. Seventh-grade students wrote creative name poems, researching their names, interviewing family members about them, and taking a look at their own characteristics. Each student then crafted a creative poem about their name, what it means to them, and how it has shaped who they are. At the end of the project, the students made stained-glass paper nameplates to display their poems.

The school continues to enjoy a partnership with White Oak Farm. The farm volunteers have led the students in activities like making corn tortillas and parsley pesto and using microscopes to learn about soil structure. Students always look forward to the garden club!

A group of older students are doing art with Linda Kappen, who has graciously volunteered to lead this after-school group during her retirement.



Cougars

We are the blue and white
 We will use all our might
 If we lose, at least we tried
 We will still have our Cougar pride

By Marquee Hersha

The SMART (Start Making a Reader Today) program has returned this year. A group of wonderful volunteers come every week to read with students. Each is paired with a child to share books with them, modeling the joy of reading while supporting the child's efforts to read independently. The student then gets to keep the book.

Meanwhile, many older students have been preparing for the Oregon Battle of the Books. They have been reading the books on the list. In the competition, students answer questions to earn points for their team. This year, an amazing parent volunteer, Jeneane Morrison, has been coming weekly to help the fifth-grade team prepare.

With literacy being a focus at the school, we were excited for the annual Family Literacy Night at the end of February, hoping to meet or exceed last year's attendance of around 100 people and last year's giveaway of nearly 75 books to participants of all ages, toddler through adult. At this annual event, families participate in activities like experiencing an escape room and making bookmarks. This year, the theme was literary genres, with a focus on Greek mythology.

Applegate School has an after-school sports program for any fifth- through eighth-grade student who wants to join. Team coaches Diana West and I teach the basic skills of basketball and enjoy watching the players grow in their abilities throughout the seasons. The students are encouraged and cheered on by staff, students, families, and friends at the games, and the team loves seeing the Applegate Cougar Pride!

This is just one thing that makes Applegate School so special.

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ROCS students being interviewed by local news stations. Photo: Ryan King.

ROCS students raise funds for people impacted by California wildfires

BY RYAN KING

Inspired by a writing prompt on New Year's goals, fourth-grade students at Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS) exercised compassion for California communities impacted by wildfires. They organized a fundraiser for World Central Kitchen, a charity organization providing meals for people in crisis. Fire hats sat in each class as preschool through eighth grade students raised cash donations for wildfire victims in southern California. The fundraising mastermind was fourth-grader Carl Ehlig.

"Our community is impacted by wildfires, too, so this is something our school can do to help other communities," Carl said. He says that the students learned that fundraising can be hard, but teaches them hospitality. The goal was \$902.72, the zip code for the Palisades. After two weeks, the students surpassed their goal with a total amount of \$1,225. One of the fundraising frontrunners was kindergartener, Emma Herud, who raised \$270.

"[I want to] help them get some more food and, over the future, help them get houses again." Her mom was inspired to see Emma's generous response after seeing the impact of the Alameda Fire. "I think it's absolutely incredible, especially since all of us still have memories of a few years ago, and watching fires affect our community," said Jeanna Herud.

Thank you to the local businesses that also supported this project:

- Applegate Valley Fire District
- Black Barn Farm
- Ruch Country Store
- Ruch Hardware Store
- Sweets N Eats

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Ruch School fundraiser flyer.