



Photo by Linda Kappen

Answering the call: Your community, your fire district

BY FIRE CHIEF CHRIS WOLFARD

In the heart of the Applegate, where neighbors still wave as they pass and the landscape is both breathtaking and unpredictable, the Applegate Fire District has long stood as a symbol of local strength and service. For decades, we’ve responded to fires, medical emergencies, rescues, and vehicle crashes—often in the most remote reaches of our community.

We’re proud of that legacy. But like many rural fire districts across the country, we find ourselves at a crossroads.

Our coverage area spans almost 200 square miles. To protect a community this widespread, we rely on multiple stations, each strategically placed to keep response times down and service levels



high. Those stations are stocked with equipment, training, and readiness. What they also need, what they’ve always needed, is community members willing to serve.

Some stations are busier than others. In some areas, it’s become harder to keep resources rolling from nearby. And when fewer people are available locally, calls take longer to respond to, workloads shift to other crews, and some tough decisions start looming a little closer.

The good news? That future isn’t written yet. We can still shape it—together.

You don’t need a background in emergency services. You don’t need to be an athlete or an adrenaline junkie. What

See FIRE DISTRICT, page 2.



2025 Applegate Valley Fire District awardees. Photo: Liza Crosse.

Applegate Valley Fire District Annual Awards

BY LIZA CROSSE

On March 21, 2025, the Applegate Valley Fire District and the Friends of the Applegate Fire District came together for a joyous celebration—the annual Awards Banquet, hosted by the Friends of the Applegate Fire District. This yearly gathering is an opportunity to acknowledge accomplishments and excellent performance by staff members, students, volunteers, and apprentices. **Swearing-in of new firefighters**

The Applegate Fire District sponsors a remarkable number of students through the Firefighter 1 program at Rogue Community College and the Rogue Interagency Training Association. We celebrated the following new graduates and wish them well as they pursue their careers:

- Mark Astry
- Aiden Bland
- Jonah Michael
- Joaquin Barragan
- Gavin Brayman
- Alex McGlasson
- Hunter Krouse
- Elizabeth Dunlap
- Ramiro Silva
- Alessandro Acevedo

Length of Service Awards

Five years: McKenzie Turnbull, Lauren Fischer, Carson Roeloffs.

Friends of the Applegate Fire District Award for outstanding volunteer service to the district

Pat and Candy Courtney
Brian—Brush Hook Award to acknowledge outstanding partners who support the fire district mission in fuel reduction

Janelle Dunlevy and Nate Gehres, Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council

Alex McGlasson, Applegate Fire, Fuels Specialist

Rookie Firefighters of the Year

- Sam Thompson
- Kevin Lakin

Students of the Year

- Sam Thompson
- Carter McDougall

Emergency Medical Service Award

Thomas Crosse

2024 Emergency Medical Service Achievements

This award recognizes students, apprentices, and staff members who completed additional EMS training, such as EMT or paramedic licenses, to better assist our community in medical emergencies.

- Jonah Michael
- Ramiro Silva
- Carter McDougall
- Sam Thompson
- Thomas Crosse
- Carson Roeloffs
- Kevin Lakin
- Alessandro Acevedo

Volunteer Firefighter of the Year

Justin Rainey

Mary Ziegler Family Member of the Year

John Jackson

Marc Chaput Spirit Award

Arthur Johnson

Firefighter of the Year

Chris Partida

Officer of the Year

Mitch Kuntz

Hall of Flame

William Schmidt

Liza Crosse

lizacrosse@comcast.net

415-279-4637

A fresh new start for the Upper Applegate Grange

BY ALLIE PARKIN

The Upper Applegate Grange was officially chartered in 1936 in a vertical-log building near McKee Bridge. After this building burned down in September 1955, members worked hard to build the current Grange, which officially opened in June 1957. Membership began dwindling at some point, and the organization officially closed its doors, possibly in the late 1990s or early 2000s.

There was a brief revival from 2012 to 2016, which was followed by several years of dormancy. Recently, the Upper Applegate Grange received an official charter, signed by the National Grange Master, recognizing Upper Applegate Grange #839 as an official, legal Grange once again. We are excited to display our Charter Certificate in the hall.

As I write this article, the Upper Applegate Grange has been officially reorganized for almost eight months. It took a lot of work to make the building usable again, as it had been sitting empty for several years. We found some mice, a



Thanks to volunteers, the Applegate Grange got a new coat of paint. Photo: Allie Parkin.

few bats, and a couple of lizard residents, who were calling the Grange home. After our initial deep clean, we held our first event in September 2024—a rummage sale made possible by your amazing donations, which really helped us get off the ground. Since then, we’ve hosted several events and the building is now available for rent through our event scheduler, Rebecca Maddox.

The Grange community has been working hard these last several months with outdoor cleanup, backroom organizing, and addressing building needs. Last winter’s upgraded heating system has made

See APPLEGATE GRANGE, page 6.

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FIRE - WATER

OBITUARY

Richard Lee Goodnough
June 1, 1948 - April 20, 2025

Richard Lee Goodnough was born to Howard Miller (Mickey) and Thelma Cleo Goodnough on June 1, 1948, in Lakeview, Oregon. Raised in Lakeview, he graduated from high school as part of the class of 1966. He worked in the family business, Rose Cleaners,



and after high school, went on to begin a short career with the United States Forest Service (USFS). In 1968, he married the love of his life, Thelma Lenore Flick (Goodnough), whom he had met at school in Lakeview, and together they moved to Ashland, Oregon, to attend college at Southern Oregon College (now Southern Oregon University). They bought property in the Applegate in 1973, where they continued to build a life together, building two homes and raising a son, David “Cody” Goodnough.

Richard worked for USFS, Oregon State Forestry, and as a potter. He eventually began working as a self-employed contractor and handyman, and he made a living working primarily for customers in the Applegate Valley. As a local carpenter and handyman, Richard touched many lives and worked on many houses here in the Applegate. He may have used his skills as a carpenter, electrician, or plumber to assist you with any number of projects in which you sought his services, or he may have assisted you in

an emergency situation. He was one of the founding members of the Applegate Valley Rural Fire Protection District #9, which took over fire protection duties from the local Lions Club in 1980. He served in various ranks within the fire district, including Firefighter, Captain, and Battalion Chief. He was also certified as an Emergency Medical Technician and served multiple terms as an elected member of the Board of Directors. In total, he served with the fire district for 34 years.

Richard passed away on Sunday, April 20, 2025. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brothers, Howard and Orvelle. He is survived by his wife, Thelma; his baby sister, Thelma Cox (yes that is correct; his mother, sister, and wife were all named Thelma); his son Cody; his grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank all those who have reached out with words of condolence and support. We’ve always believed, and now we’re assured, that he touched many lives in a positive way, and for that we are grateful.

A celebration of life will be held at 10:30 am Saturday, June 14, at Cantrall Buckley Park Group A. Please consider bringing your own lawn chairs.

Thelma and Cody Goodnough
cgoodnough@gmail.com

A loss in the community

I lost a dear friend of 50 years and Applegate residents lost another of our finest people with Richard Goodnough’s passing this past April.

We met in 1974 while working at Star Ranger Station, and we were perhaps unlikely friends—he having resisted the draft and I having returned recently from Vietnam. But we became very close, and we worked in the woods together, cutting firewood and poles in the off-season. Genealogy shows that in Virginia in the 1770s, the “Goodenough” and “Typton” families intermarried, and I’ve always felt that Richard was truly “my brother.”

When my wife, Janis, and I were trying to purchase property near them in 1977, Richard and Thelma offered us

half ownership of their property, along with half the milking duties that come with a fresh Jersey cow and everything that trickles down from that—calves, pigs, turkeys, and chickens. Some of the best years of my life were spent living there with them.

We also worked together in construction, along with others, as Billy Mountain Builders Cooperative. Later, Richard and Chris Bratt formed a construction company named Cottage Green.

Richard touched the lives of many people over the years. Personally, I’m going to miss our 30-year tradition of weekly pool games that assured we’d stay connected.

Paul Tipton • ptipton4u2c@gmail.com

■ FIRE DISTRICT

Continued from page 1

you need is the heart to help, the time to train, and the willingness to be there when your neighbors need you most.

Applegate Fire District provides everything you need to get started: training, gear, support, and a clear path toward becoming a firefighter or emergency responder. We also have roles for those who want to assist behind the scenes—driving water tenders, supporting wildland crews, or providing rehab and logistics at fire scenes. There’s a role for everyone who’s ready to step forward.

Volunteering is more than answering alarms. It’s about presence. It’s about knowing that your contribution helps keep your neighborhood protected. It’s about ensuring that when something goes wrong, help is already nearby—not coming from a station on the other side of the valley.

Over the years, we’ve had generations of families serve in our ranks—parents,

children, siblings. That tradition of service has helped shape who we are, and we hope to see it continue. Whether you’re just starting out, have recently retired, or are somewhere in between, this could be your moment to carry the torch.

When people talk about the Applegate Fire District, they speak with respect and gratitude—not just for the service we provide, but for the heart we bring to every call. We’re honored to be part of such a caring community, and we’re always looking for others who feel that same sense of purpose and pride.

We invite you to visit a station, meet our crews, and explore how you might fit in. It could be one of the most rewarding decisions you ever make.

For more information or to apply, visit applegatefd.com or call 541-899-1050. We’ll guide you every step of the way.

Chris Wolfard, Fire Chief
Applegate Fire District
cwolfard@applegatefd.com

Food, wine, music, and more at Troon Vineyard

BY DIANA COOGLE

Nowhere else in the Applegate on June 7 can you find such an afternoon of good food, wine, inspiration, knowledge, and fun as at Troon Vineyard. Join us there for the Siskiyou Crest Coalition’s 2025 fundraiser.

Here’s the scoop

What: An afternoon and evening of tours, speakers, music, delicious food, and great wine.

Where: Troon Vineyard, 1475 Kubli Road.

When: Saturday, June 7, 1-7 pm.

Who: You!

Why: For all this:

- Weed identification workshop with the Pollinator Project of the Rogue Valley at 1 pm.
- Butterfly walk with Linda Kappen, the *Applegater’s* butterfly columnist (see page 13) at 2:30 pm.
- Inspirational nature talk by biologist and writer Pepper Trail, winner of the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy’s 2024 Conservation Award at 3 pm.
- Tour of Troon, the only Demeter Biodynamic and Regenerative Organic Certified winery and farm in Oregon, led by Garrett Long, Troon’s Director of Agriculture at 3:30 pm.
- Tour of the native plant garden by garden architect Suzie Savoie at 4 pm.
- Music by country blues and folk musician Scott Knickerbocker, starting at 5 pm.
- Artisan pizza dinner by Chef Carl, of Wilder Cooking, with salad, dessert, and a complimentary glass of Troon’s wine at 5 pm.



Kangaroo Mountain as seen from a flight over the Siskiyou Crest with Ecoflight.
Photo: Frank Lospalluto.

- Words of inspiration and delight by Siskiyou botanist Kristi Mergenthaler and others during dinner.
- Music, socializing, another glass of wine (but not complimentary), another stroll through the garden, contemplation of the mountains, and talk of plants, hikes, and Siskiyou adventures with friends and botanical experts until 7 pm.

The best reason: To support the work of the Siskiyou Crest Coalition, which endeavors to find permanent protections for the public lands of the Siskiyou Crest, not only because of the world-significant botanical diversity and the wildlife that lives in the Siskiyou, but for the viewshed and watershed that are so important to Troon, other vineyards, and, indeed, to all of us who live in the Applegate.

How: Tickets are available for \$50 at siskiyoucrestcoalition.org/fundraiser/. You can also buy tickets at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/siskiyou-crest-coalition-fundraiser-at-troon-vineyard-tickets-1343175206199?aff=oddtcreator>.

See you at Troon on June 7!

Diana Coogle • dicoog@gmail.com

Three Rivers Community Orchestra Spring Concert

BY COLLEEN KIRKLAND

The Three Rivers Community Orchestra (TRCO) will hold our Spring Concert on Sunday, June 1, at 3 pm at the Grants Pass Performing Arts Center, located at Grants Pass High School. We will be under the direction of our new conductor, Dr. Jason Heald. Dr. Heald is the Director of Music at Umpqua Community College and an award-winning composer, performer, educator, and clinician in the Pacific Northwest. We are very excited to have him, as he is challenging us to new heights of musical performance. He became our conductor in January and has already conducted our April Concert, which included a local piano soloist, Anna Christina Streletz, and brought the Roseburg Concert Chorale to sing with us. For this concert, we will be

performing Mozart’s “Exsultate, jubilate (Motet), K. 165” with a soloist, the Schubert “Overture in D,” Sibelius’s “Valse Triste,” Borodin’s “Polovtsian Dances,” and Heald’s own composition “Three Dances.”

Our musicians are all from the local area and love classical music. We meet on Thursday nights from 6:30-8:30 pm at North Middle School in Grants Pass and are looking for musicians of orchestral instruments who are passionate about sharing music with others. Our concerts are all free, though donations are welcome. If you have questions, feel free to contact me.

Colleen Kirkland, Vice President
Three Rivers Community Orchestra
dekirklands@gmail.com
541-476-0860

Coming Soon:
Rat Route 238
Paragliding Event!

On June 8-13, watch paragliders land daily at local businesses in the Applegate Valley during this week-long event! Spectators are invited to enjoy the show, take in the views, and explore local flavors and goods. Landings will take place each afternoon between 2-5 pm at featured venues, including LongSword Vineyard, KingFisher Lavender Farm, and Red Lily Vineyards.

The Applegater Board of Directors welcomes three new members!

BY DIANA COOGLE

We are thrilled to announce that Ash Martell, Heather Paladini, and Chris Loeffler have all joined the *Applegater* Board of Directors.

Originally from Idaho, Ash Martell lives in Williams and works part-time at the Williams Fire Department in a public relations capacity. She has a bachelor's degree in theater and brings to the board secretarial skills and experience. She "understands deadlines" (thank goodness!), and she has done PR, advertising, and design work. Perhaps most important, she lists among her skills that she adapts well and likes to learn. She says she is the kind of person who would say, "I'd like to take that on." As proof, she immediately agreed to head up a committee for the *Applegater's* volunteer appreciation party, even before she became a board member!

You might already be familiar with Heather Paladini's name, as she is our new bird columnist. (See page 14). Heather also lives in Williams. She started and continues to run the Wild Oak Preschool in Williams. When she was looking for property in the area, she says, she picked up an *Applegater* and fell in love with it and, by extension, with the Applegate. She brings to the board her experience with grant writing, secretarial positions, and fundraising. Her passions are nature, the environment, and bringing people together.

Chris Loeffler, who is also from Williams, comes to the board with a wealth of business, writing, publishing, and outreach experience, both from his previous job with Musician's Friend in Medford and in his work with Cub Scouts and food drives for the homeless. His strength in project management makes him an asset in many areas of board duties.

Go to applegater.org and click on "Board of Directors" for more biographical information about these three new board members. I am excited to be working with them. What a boost of energy and enthusiasm!

Thanks to these three people, to the others already on the board, and to all of



Ash Martell



Heather Paladini



Chris Loeffler

you who help make the Applegate such a great place to live.

Diana Coogle
Chair, *Applegater* Board of Directors
diana@applegater.org

Starry, starry nights

BY CHRISTINA AMMON

A new group advocating for dark skies has formed in the Applegate Valley. Applegate After Dark was formed to celebrate the region's starry skies and to spread awareness about the ecological, economic, and aesthetic benefits of dark skies.

The group was inspired in part by the recent designation of the "Oregon Outback" as The Largest Dark Sky Sanctuary in the World. The Oregon Outback is in the eastern part of the state, in Lake County. The designation is expected to boost tourism to the Eastern Oregon region. Stargazing is an increasingly popular travel motivator as access to dark skies becomes increasingly scarce in modern life.

Of particular focus for our local group is the Provolt Recreation Site on Williams Highway in Grants Pass. The lack of artificial lighting in this area of the



Applegate makes it an ideal site for star parties.

The group is currently collecting data on dark skies throughout the Applegate. The group also plans to conduct lighting assessments and assist interested homeowners and business owners in reducing their light pollution through responsible lighting practices.

Group member Sam Dennis is motivated by energy efficiency. Approximately 30 percent of all outdoor lighting goes upward, where it isn't needed. "When I see light going where it's not doing anything useful, it's like seeing somebody watering the sidewalk," Sam says.

If you are interested in star parties or getting involved with Applegate After Dark, contact Liz Shen at liz_shen@hotmail.com.

Christina Ammon
christina@footlooseintheapplegate.com

Log Town Cemetery: A historic hidden gem at risk

BY GABRIELLE PULLEN

Log Town Cemetery is easy to miss. It's on Highway 238, up the hill from Jacksonville, nestled among trees, where the road, as it straightens out, invites the restless to drive too fast. This small, historic burial ground provides a safe haven for the remains of early settlers and ancestors of the pioneering Applegate family.

It's hard to believe, but the site remains unprotected as a historic landmark, leaving its legacy vulnerable. The Log Town Cemetery Association, a nonprofit formed in 1939, owns and operates the cemetery, which is maintained exclusively by volunteers. For decades, volunteer Scott Traina has led the overwhelming task of maintenance—clearing, digging, organizing, and unraveling the extensive puzzle of who lies where. This ensures that, as people bury the sons and daughters of the Applegate there, no new additions infringe on the past.

Inspired by Jackson County landmarks like the Jacksonville Historic District and Hanley Farm, which secured preservation grants, this article calls for grant writers, volunteers, and advocates to ensure Log Town's legacy endures as a protected historic site.

The graveyard dates back to the 1850s. The plots are unfenced, the headstones weathered. Some are illegible, and some graves are still unmarked, leaving the mystery of whose forbears have been laid to rest there. Without maintenance, the site will quickly succumb to overgrown vegetation, erosion, broken headstones, and a faceless history.

In 2016, private donations allowed the Log Town Cemetery Association to install a fence. Rogue Valley Genealogical Society and Jackson County document known burial records. But without funding or organizational support, Log Town's condition is fragile.

Yet, volunteer numbers are limited, and Traina seeks new stewards. He currently has a new sexton in training.

Log Town is a vital link to the Applegate Valley's past. The Applegate family—Charles, Jesse, and Lindsay—blazed the Applegate Trail, which is part of the southern Oregon Trail, in the 1840s. Many buried in the Log Town Cemetery are their descendants or contemporaries. Their graves are landmarks of local resilience. Preserving Log Town ensures that these stories of pioneer perseverance endure. The cemetery is only six miles from the Jacksonville Historic District, a National Historic Landmark since 1966, which maintains its gold rush-era buildings through grants. But only protected historic sites are eligible for those grants.

Why isn't Log Town a protected historic site? Its rural location and size reduce visibility to the public. The process of nominating a site to the National Register of Historic Places requires historical documentation to confirm plot ownership, but records are often illegible.



Log Town headstone of Cordelia A. Pearce.

Maintenance is unsustainable for the cemetery's few volunteers, many of whom are retired. Although rural cemeteries nationwide face this challenge, this one is special. It was named after the nearby Log Town settlement, a bustling hub for miners and travelers to the Applegate Valley. In the 1860s, there were stores, a meat market, a hotel, a church, a school, and three saloons. During the gold rush, Log Town was probably a stagecoach stop on the road to Buncom, just a few miles away, with its mining camp, supply center, and post office. On the Applegate Trail, Robber's Rock, a huge rock not far from the cemetery that is referenced in local historical accounts, is said to have been a hiding place for thieves preying on the stagecoach travelers during this era. The California Stage Company's route started operation in 1860, connecting Jacksonville to Log Town at the mouth of the Applegate.

Grants already funding preservation of historic landmarks in Jackson County include:

Jacksonville Historic District: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and Certified Local Government Grants

Hanley Farm: Oregon Heritage and National Trust for Historic Preservation Grants

Medford Downtown Historic District: Save America's Treasures National Park Service Grant

Gold Ray Dam Site: The Oregon Historic Trails Fund

Phoenix Pioneer Cemetery: 2020 Oregon Lottery Grant

Traina's work has kept Log Town Cemetery alive, but the community must act. Grant writers, volunteers, advocates, and new board members can ensure that the legacy of the Applegate and its ancestors endures. Please call 541-973-5139 to help save the Log Town Cemetery legacy now.

Gabrielle Pullen
gabrielle.pullen@gmail.com
Gabrielle Pullen is a history buff with great respect for the stamina and resilience of our forebears.

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POETRY CORNER

This Day

By Seth Kaplan • sethkap55@gmail.com

It's a day like no other.
Shadow-and-dust-colored rabbits
in the field, alert and watchful.
Turkeys circle the forest oak, prim and attentive.
The deer you count every year peek out
from the edge of the woods for a better view
following your movements with anticipation.

All of this you notice, along with the gestures
of the clouds, and your ears perk to the sound
of raven wings from above. The thickening of the light
as the season progresses. Your eyes attune
to the play of color and texture across the meadow.
Your nose remembers a familiar scent.

This day is like no other.
For it is only now you understand
all of this place recognizes you
speaks your name
calls you home.

Seth Kaplan is a recent emigrant from Humbug Creek to Talent. He is eternally grateful to the Applegate Poets and a sweet community of extraordinary people who share his wonder of the Applegate Valley. Seth's poetry has recently appeared in The Rapids: A Literary & Art Journal of Southern Oregon, RavensPerch, Tokyo Poetry Journal, Cobra Lily, and Jefferson Journal. His first book of poems, Habitat: Unearthing Home, was published by N8tive Run Press earlier this year. [See book review, this page.]

Have a submission for Poetry Corner, either written by an Applegate resident or about the Applegate? Email it to *Applegater* poetry editor Paul Tipton at ptipton4u2c@gmail.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Habitat:
Unearthing Home

Seth Kaplan
N8tive Run Press
Grants Pass, Oregon

BY PAUL TIPTON

My immediate email reaction after reading former Applegate resident Seth Kaplan's recently published book was, "Wow! What an impressive grouping of words, so well-chosen and arranged into poems, then gathered into this excellent collection of poetry that exposes the depths of the thinking of a great mind, and the depth of love Seth has for his family and the world around him. I feel like I know so much more about him now—his life and his background—than I knew before."

If you didn't already know, Seth and I have known each other since 2016. We've worked together on community projects, and we read poetry together monthly with the Applegate Poets. So, I could be prejudiced, but I also know quality work when I see it, and hear it, as a large crowd of people did at the launch of Seth's book recently at Red Lily Vineyards.

Habit: Unearthing Home is such a potent phrase, reminding me of archeology stories of the Middle East and the unearthing of "tells," the mounds consisting of many layers of the remnants of human activity, some thousands of years old. Similarly, Seth strips open the various layers of his personal history, exposing them for us to study and compare to our own. He is constantly searching deep into that history, yet also constantly finding his place in the world. As he says in "This Day," "This day is like no other./ For it is only now you understand/ all of this place recognizes you/ speaks your name/ calls you home."



These poems explore both physical and metaphysical habitats, as we read at the end of "In the Beginning": "Chronicling the endless cycle/ of beginnings fully realized./ All that was ever new, unimagined/ becoming known and seen." And if he sees the physical "This Old Barn," his ruminations lead him to this: "It takes some years to weather/ into what we become. This hovel/ of haphazard life honestly built,/ if not always elegantly." But these are not haphazard poems. They are finely crafted and elegant story-songs from a highly sentient being.

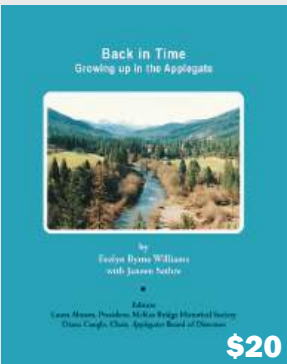
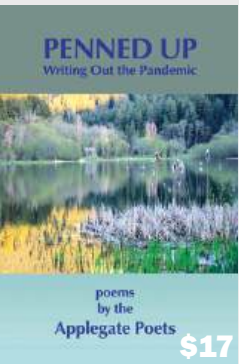
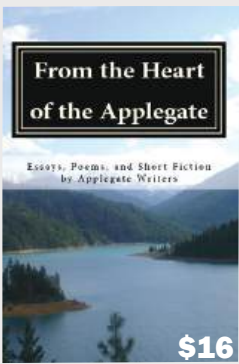
This is a book that is well worth the time to read and then come back to and read again, to connect with that "love of precious things/ By the wish to be at home" (Seth echoing Wendell Berry's words). This is a very fine first book of poetry, and I think we should expect to see and hear more from Seth Kaplan in the future.

Habitat is available at Rebel Heart Books in Jacksonville or at Bloomsbury Books in Ashland. It is also available for loan from the Applegate and Ruch libraries. To order directly from him, send an email to sethkap55@gmail.com.

Paul Tipton
ptipton4u2c@gmail.com

Have a happy and safe
Fourth of July!

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The Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc. (AVCN) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to the publication of the *Applegater* newsmagazine, which, we feel, reflects the heart and soul of our community.

Our Mission

The goal of the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., is to provide the Applegate watershed with a communication vehicle, the *Applegater*, that will provide educational information, increase community networking, and represent all the area's diverse communities. Through honest, constructive, relevant, and entertaining reports on a wide variety of subjects and viewpoints, including our natural resources, historical and current events, and community news, we can work together to enhance the quality of life we have in the Applegate, and continue to make a difference in our valley.

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All articles submitted to the *Applegater* are subject to edit and publication at the newsmagazine's discretion and as space allows. No more than one article per author per issue. When too many articles are submitted to include in any one issue, some articles may be placed on our website or held until the following issue.

Photo Requirements

All photos submitted must be high resolution (300 dpi) or "large format" (e.g., 30" x 40"). If you have questions, email gater@applegater.org.

Photos submitted for the front-page banner are on a volunteer basis. Credit is given in the issue in which it appears, on our website, and on our Facebook page.

Submissions for the next issue must be received at gater@applegater.org by the deadline (see Editorial Calendar on this page).

Applegater Newsmagazine
PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530
applegater.org

Ready to recreate

BY CHRISTINA AMMON

With a shoreline surrounded by wilderness, hiking trails, and wildlife, Applegate Lake is the cherished summertime idyll of southern Oregon residents. The most centrally located of the region's three reservoirs (Applegate, Emigrant, and Lost Creek lakes), it draws visitors from all nearby towns—Grants Pass, Medford, Jacksonville, and Ashland—and beyond.

A Greater Applegate (AGA) recently applied for a Recreation Ready grant from Travel Oregon to support repairs and improvements along the lake's difficult-to-access, 18-mile shoreline. The two-phase program was designed to bring in experts for a feasibility study the first year and then provide \$100,000 toward implementing the project in phase two. Although AGA did not receive the Recreation Ready grant, the application garnered a high score in the very competitive grant program and highlighted both the need for and community enthusiasm about a more accessible shoreline.

In recent years, the Forest Service has not had the extra resources to improve the lake's infrastructure. As a result, the

few existing paths to the shoreline are eroding, and facilities are out of date. Much of the lake's edge is steep, rocky, and difficult for even the most able-bodied person to navigate. Often, the boat ramps double dangerously as beaches. Forest Service employee John McKelligott, who has been involved with the lake for decades, pointed out that Hart-Tish Park and other lake access sites were constructed around 1980. "At that time ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] knowledge and focus were not too well understood or wisely funded and implemented," he said.

This grant effort isn't the first time the community has voiced concerns about the lake. In 2019, a group called Friends of Applegate advocated for infrastructure improvements. The group included residents, two Forest Service employees, Bert Etling (former editor of the *Applegater*), and the commissary who managed the lake's campground and store at Hart-Tish Park.

The pandemic interrupted that effort. When no funding manifested and the



Due to lack of funding, many existing accessibility paths are badly eroded—even hazardous.
Photo: Christina Ammon.

group's leader moved across the country, the effort lost momentum.

The desire "to expand, and to expand and improve access to, the Applegate Valley's outdoor recreational opportunities" was expressed at the 2020/2021 resident listening sessions held throughout the Applegate. This desire is described in the "Steward & Sustain" section of the Applegate Valley Vision, available online at agreaterapplegate.org.

This latest effort was sparked after AGA sponsored *In a Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild* last May at the day-use beach area near Hart-Tish. This popular touring series showcases musician Hunter Noack performing on his Steinway in outdoor

See RECREATE, page 18.

A huge THANKS to the generous donors who recently contributed to the Applegater.

BEAR

Claudia Beausoleil, Williams, OR

STEELHEAD

Sylva Hatchman, Grants Pass, OR

Kristina Lefever, Ashland, OR

Don & Lori Sayer, Applegate, OR

DEER

Anonymous, Jacksonville, OR (2)

Marguerite Cole, Jacksonville, OR

Audrey Eldridge, Albany, OR

Bert Etling, Talent, OR

Thelma Goodnough, Applegate, OR

Harold Hopkins

Humbug Creek Resident,

Applegate, OR

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Editorial Calendar

ISSUE DEADLINE

FALL (Sept - Nov)August 1
Earth - Air

WINTER (Dec - Feb)....November 1
Holiday - Arts

SPRING (March - May) ... February 1
History - Heritage

SUMMER (June - Aug) May 1
Fire - Water

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— Applegate Library —
Wild reads and wonder!



BY CHRISTINE GRUBB

The Applegate Library provides educational programs, classes, resources, and meeting room space. We give the Applegate community the tools they need to succeed, including story times, musical performances, technology support, and everything from books, e-books, and audiobooks to music and movies.

The Summer Reading Program (SRP) theme this year is “Embrace the Wild.” Take a walk on the wild side and join us for programs throughout the summer.

Upcoming events

Gentle Yoga with Teri, 18+ years. Join us for gentle Hatha yoga for *every body*. This foundational practice benefits mind, body, and spirit. *Please bring your own mat and/or blanket*. No registration or experience required. 8:30-9:30 am Tuesday, June 3 and 17; July 1 and 15; and August 5 and 19.

Summer Reading Program Kick-off Party, 3+ years. Sign up for the Summer Reading Program! Win prizes, engage in a scavenger hunt, enjoy light refreshments, and get ready for a summer of reading! 12:30-2 pm Saturday, June 7.

Embrace Your Inner Wild: Music and Movement with Laurie Finear, 8+ years. This class combines singing, rhythm, movement, and sign language. Get ready to sing beloved songs from around the world and make music together. 1-2 pm Saturday, June 14.

Rewild with Earth Dumplings! 3+ years. Learn how to make Earth Dumplings—also known as seed cookies—an ancient Japanese practice. Making seed bombs is a wonderful way to bring nourishment to the soil and flowers and add joy! 12:30-1:30 pm Saturday, June 21.

Learn, Fold, Create! 8+ years. Create wild animals out of paper with FOLD Rogue Valley! Learn your first origami skills or level up with a variety of models and challenge levels for all ages. 1-2:30 pm Saturday, June 28.

Storytelling with Will Hornyak, 6+ years. From American tall tales and Native American myths to Mexican fables, Russian fairy-tales, and beyond, Will Hornyak weaves a wide web of beautifully crafted stories from oral traditions around the world. 1-2 pm Saturday, July 12.

Aprende a bailar con el Ballet Folklórico/Learn to Dance with Ballet Folklórico, 6+ AÑOS/6+ YRS. *Practica danzas folclóricas tradicionales y aprende sobre las diversas culturas de diferentes estados de México en un ambiente divertido*

y acogedor. No se requiere experiencia. Practice traditional folk dances and learn about the diverse cultures from different states of Mexico in a fun and supportive atmosphere. 1-2 pm Saturday, July 12.

Bugs as Food? That’s Wild! Learn about Bugs with John Jackson of Bugs R Us, 6+ years. Witness some of the largest preserved insects on Earth! You will get to touch many of them. Noon-1 pm Tuesday, July 29.

Make Your Landscape More Wild with Kristina from the Pollinator Project, 18+ years. In this program, Kristina will share philosophies and practicalities in creating a more wild landscape for your home and community. With real-life stories, videos, and plant resources and lists, you’ll be ready to go a little more wild. 2-3 pm Saturday, August 2.

Love Where You Live, Defend What You Love with the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center (KS Wild), 18+ years. In this program, we’ll dig into details about the region’s unique nature, highlight some of our favorite spots on public lands, and talk about how folks can get engaged with local advocacy in the region. 1-2 pm Saturday, August 16.

Cole Cullen in Concert, 8+ years. Singer/songwriter Cole Cullen (colecullen.com) will perform songs from his recently released CDs with a possible guest or two. 5:30-6:30 pm Thursday, August 28.

Reminders

A Digital Services representative will be at the Applegate branch library on Tuesdays from 10 am-12:30 pm on a first-come-first-serve basis. You can also make an appointment by email at digitalservices@jcls.org or by phone at 541-734-3990.

The Applegate Library meeting room can be booked for your meeting, program, or event (even when the library is closed) by going to jcls.libcal.com/reserve/ap-meeting. Need a place to rehearse? You can do that here, whether for a meeting or music practice.

Wi-Fi is available 24-7 in our parking lot and available inside during open hours.

Preschool Storytime is Fridays from 11-11:30 am.

Christine Grubb
Applegate Branch Library Manager
Jackson County Library Services
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cgrubb@jcls.org
18485 North Applegate Road

— Ruch Library —
Embrace the wild!

BY MEGAN PINDER

Embrace the wild this summer at the Ruch Library! Join us for programs that focus on wilderness, free-spirited art and movement, and of course, reading with reckless abandon. Summer Reading runs from June 1 to August 31—all ages are encouraged to participate online and/or by registering in person. Summer readers will receive a gift book and be entered in a drawing!

Nature Journaling 101, 12+ years. Kickstart your nature journaling practice with educators from the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council. We will begin the workshop with a 30-minute presentation at the library, then caravan one mile to Cantrall Buckley Park. All materials are provided. This is a two-part series; participants can attend one or both events. 1-3 pm Saturday, June 7 and 14.

Behind-the-Scenes with Southern Oregon PBS, 18+ years. Southern Oregon PBS documentary filmmakers will share their experiences and demonstrate how they adapt to and engage with people, places, and communities across our region. 4-5 pm Thursday, June 12.

Wildflower Embroidery. Join us in making a beautiful wildflower embroidery keepsake. No experience needed. A kit is provided: hoop, fabric, needle, and thread! *Registration required at jcls.org/events or by calling the Ruch Library*. 1-2 pm Saturday, June 21.

Music and Movement with Laurie Finear, 8+ years. This class combines singing, rhythm, movement, and sign language. Get ready to sing beloved songs from around the world! 1-2 pm Saturday, June 28.

Southern Oregon Mammals Spotlight: Beavers!, 18+ years. Biologists from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will discuss the fascinating history and biology of beavers, as well as their amazing effects on riverine ecology. 1-2 pm Saturday, July 5.

Drawing with Janis, 16+ years. “Embrace the Wild” through a new way of drawing that uses Zentangle-inspired structural patterns of lines, shapes, and dots in a nature-inspired shape. All skill levels are welcome, and materials are provided. If you have a favorite wild animal or plant, bring a picture of it to transform into an outline shape. 5-6:30 pm Thursday, July 10.

Drawing with Janis, 6+ years. “Embrace the Wild” with a new way of drawing. We’ll take a fun animal shape and fill it with interesting, repeating patterns of shapes, lines, and dots. All materials provided. 1-2 pm Saturday, July 19.

Reptiles & Amphibians. John Jackson of Bugs-R-Us is bringing his portable zoo to Ruch! This program showcases live animals, including a box turtle, bearded dragon lizard, various frogs, and a few models. 1-2 pm Saturday, July 26.

Storytelling with Will Hornyak, 6+ years. From American tall tales and Native American myths to Mexican fables, Russian fairy-tales, and beyond, Will Hornyak weaves a wide web of beautifully crafted stories from oral traditions around the world. 1-2 pm Saturday, August 2.

Basic Beekeeping, all ages. Join us as we discuss the wonderful world of bees and their importance for our survival! There will “bee” a live hive, activities and crafts for the kids, and honey sticks for all, courtesy of Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association. 1-2:30 pm Saturday, August 9.

Learn to Dance with Ballet Folklórico, 6+ years. Practice traditional folk dances and learn about the diverse cultures from different states of Mexico in a fun and supportive atmosphere. 4-5 pm Thursday, August 14.

Preschool Storytime, 3-5 years. Bring your preschoolers to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs, and fun at the library. 10:30-11 am every Tuesday.

Computer and Tech Help. Meet with a Technology Education Specialist by appointment or drop in. 10 am-12:30 pm Tuesdays and 2-4:30 pm Thursdays.

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn (KPL), 0-5 years. Discover how children learn through play and daily activities: singing, telling stories, creating art, and having fun! KPL is open to everyone: young children and their families and caregivers. 10:30 am-noon every Thursday.

Bilingual Storytime for Spanish Learners, 3-10 years. Is your family interested in learning Spanish? Join us for a 30-minute bilingual story time, followed by some informal practice with other families. All levels welcome. 4-5 pm first and third Thursdays.

Community Yoga, 13+ years. Join us for an all-levels yoga class with Dr. Rachel Stricker. The Community Room will open at 8:45 and class will begin at 9:00. *Registration required at jcls.org/events or by calling the Ruch Library*. *Bring your own mat*. 9-10 am second and fourth Wednesdays.

Megan Pinder
Ruch Branch Manager
Jackson County Library Services
541-494-3284
mpinder@jcls.org
7919 Highway 238, Ruch

HAPPY FATHER’S DAY!

■ APPLGATE GRANGE

Continued from page 1

the concrete building much cozier for our community gatherings. This spring, we have been painting the interior of the Grange, giving it a fresh new look. We will continue with building upgrades and maintenance as funds allow.

We’ve hosted a themed Bingo Night every third Saturday of the month since December, which has been a lot of fun, and we plan to keep those going several times a year. Our first pancake breakfast in mid-March was a huge success, and we plan to host many more. Thanks to all local businesses that donated food and beverages to the Grange for this event—we couldn’t have done it without you.

It has been proven that joining a club can significantly benefit your life. You’ll meet new people, improve your overall

health and well-being, have access to more community support, and embrace a sense of belonging. They say you’ll live longer too. Interested in becoming a member? Join us at our monthly potluck and meeting to pick up a member form.

Member dues for the entire year are \$65 for individuals and \$115 for families. \$50 of each individual membership and \$100 of each family membership are sent to the Oregon State Grange as payment for the building and access to Grange benefits. We keep \$15 of each membership payment to benefit the Upper Applegate Grange, which helps us maintain the building, provide community events, pay Grange bills, etc. If you’d like to be involved and informed about these ventures, please join us at our monthly meetings and potlucks, which take place every second Sunday of the month. We enjoy a lovely



Grange President, Tommy Maddox, presenting the Charter at the April meeting.

lunch potluck in the Grange dining hall at 1 pm, then gather for a meeting in the main hall at 2 pm. This is a great way to develop relationships, and we encourage all members and interested folks to attend.

As a nonprofit organization, we depend on our fundraising events, membership dues, and donations to keep the Grange open and active. We are always accepting monetary donations and new members.

If you would like to be added to our Grange email list to stay up to date on events and information, please send us an email. Want to host an event or have ideas for events or learning opportunities? We’d love to hear from you! To schedule an event, contact Rebecca Maddox at 541-951-6765. Follow us on Facebook at Upper Applegate Grange #839. See you at the Grange, Applegater!
Allie Parkin
upperapplegategrange@gmail.com

— Williams Library — Your summer starts here!

BY BRANDACE ROJO

Come on over to the Williams Library this summer for a variety of exciting programs. Library events and programs are open to the public free of charge. Registration is not required, and a library card is not needed to participate. Just come on in! **2025 Summer Reading Program**

All ages are invited to join the free Josephine Community Library Summer Reading Program, running from June 14 to August 9. To join and earn prizes, register beginning June 1, either online at josephinelibrary.org/summer-reading-program or at a Josephine County branch library in Grants Pass, Williams, or Wolf Creek. Don't miss out on weekly themed "craftivities" for children on open days.

Featured events at the Williams Branch

Bugs-R-Us. Learn about dinosaurs! 11:30 am-12:30 pm, Saturday, June 21.

Pollinator Pals. 10-11 am Saturday, July 12.

Neighborhood Heroes Story Squad. Read with firefighters! 11 am-noon, Friday, July 18.

Among the Stars. Learn about astronomy with Joe Stodola, of the Grants Pass Astronomers Club. 10-11 am Tuesday, August 5.

Williams Weekly Storytime. Themed story time and craft session in a safe and fun environment. 11-11:30 am every Friday.

K9 Reading Buddies. Trained therapy dogs provide a non-intimidating environment for children to learn to read out loud. Young readers explore language and books during this special story time. 3-4 pm Tuesdays.

Adult Williams Book Club. From gripping plot twists to heartwarming characters, participants can unravel the wonders of literature together. Explore what you love about the books you're reading or the ones you've recently finished. Noon-1 pm the last Saturday of every month.

Visit josephinelibrary.org/calendar to learn about weekly special events for all ages at all branches during the Summer Reading Program.

Get a library card

Explore recommended reading, attend library programs for all ages, and use public computers—services available to all. With a library card, you can also access thousands of books, e-books, and audiobooks, as well as check out laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots. Josephine County residents who live within the library district boundary receive an annual library card at no cost. Community members living in Josephine County who do not live in the library district have several options to obtain a library card, including purchasing a \$15 quarterly card, volunteering, and more. The Josephine Community Library Foundation is also happy to sponsor the cost of annual household library cards at no charge to the requesting community member. Stop by your preferred branch for more information and to sign up. **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**

Through this program, children under the age of 5 can receive a free, age-appropriate book in the mail each month. To sign up, visit josephinelibrary.org and go to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library on the "Children" page under the "Youth/Family" menu. (<https://josephinelibrary.org/youth-and-family/children/dolly-partons-imagination-library/>.)

Williams branch hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, Friday, 11 am-6 pm.

Williams Branch Library is located at 158 Tetherow Road, Williams. Contact branch manager, Amber Guient, at aguient@josephinelibrary.org or 541-846-7020.

Brandace Rojo • 541-476-0571 x114
Communications & Partnership Manager
Josephine Community Library
brojo@josephinelibrary.org

Singing in a circle: An Applegate Valley / Ruch song circle with a twist

BY PAT O'SCANNELL

I was delighted when my friend Mimi invited me to lead a new song circle in the Applegate/Ruch area, one of the most picturesque locales in southern Oregon. Mimi, a singer who lives in the area, was a member of my Medieval choir, Vox Lumina. She approached me about leading a group in singing repertoire from the Renaissance period and earlier, in the form of rounds.

Turns out that even before the time of Shakespeare, folks were singing proto-rounds, (e.g., "Sumer is Icumen In"), and by the 16th century, this form of song was in full swing. People were so into rounds during the Renaissance that they had several varieties: rounds, canons, and catches.

You know rounds, as in "Row, row, row your boat," "Frere Jacques," etc. A canon is a song that uses similar techniques but is not restricted to exact imitation. In a catch, the completed round reveals text that is only heard when all parts are sung. These naughty or funny messages occur sequentially across the parts.

The round was a serious musical form written by many famous composers of vocal music at the time. Thomas Ravenscroft, in particular, specialized in rounds and filled several books with his extensive collections. The music stands the test of time because of its exquisite beauty, on par with madrigals and part songs of that period.

Our singing circle, recently formed, has fewer than ten people currently and would like to invite more members. It meets every two weeks, on alternate Wednesday afternoons, 2:30-4 pm in a private home.

The cost is by donation and can be adjusted to fit anyone's pocketbook. For more information, please contact Mimi at applegatesongcircle@gmail.com.

Pat O'Scannell • applegatesongcircle@gmail.com
Pat O'Scannell worked with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for 30 years, directing the Early Music program for the Green Shows and the Terra Nova Consort, her ensemble that toured and made over 15 recordings. She lives in Ashland, where she runs Musica Matrix, a nonprofit that supports historically informed performances of ancient music. Her in-house ensembles perform free concerts for the community.

How to devour a book

BY THALIA TRUESDELL

Books. We love them. They feel good in our hands. They smell of *book*. They offer us insights, education, entertainment, and escape. We love them, feel the rhythm of the words, wallow in the descriptions, chase the plots, and cry at the end. But that is *not* the end.

Without extraordinary care, books decay, but decay shows that dozens, even generations, of children have loved this book—literally to death. Or perhaps a book has a broken spine, spills, or torn pages. Or maybe it has become outdated, as often happens to medical and technology books.

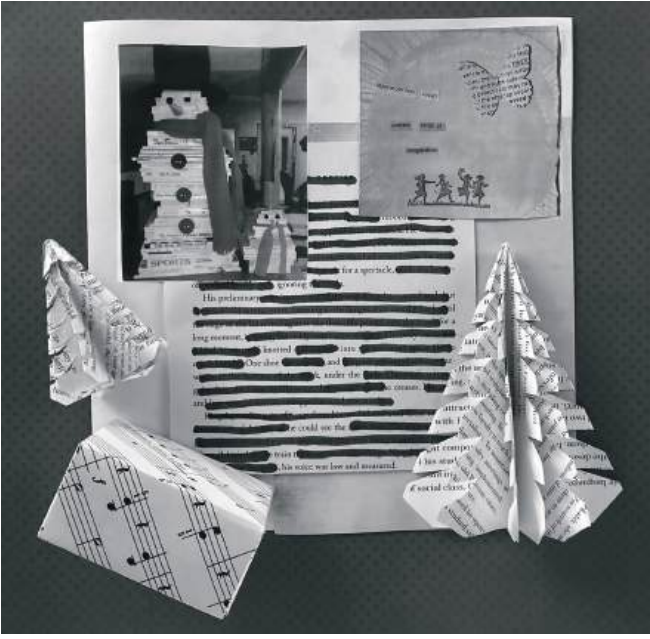
Sometimes a book has simply reached its end. Then what do you do with it?

"Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle" is a mantra we have all heard. (First of all, never refuse a book!) Sadly, books are not easily recyclable at present and many end up in landfills—but reusing and repurposing are things we can do!

Reusing is easy and unlimited. Pass it on. Used books in excellent shape make wonderful gifts, and the A-Frame Book Store has hundreds of them. Write your greetings on a bookmark, rather than inside the cover, to preserve that pristine quality. You can pass your gently used books to others via Little Libraries or to the Library Friends, charities, a thrift shop, the VA Medical Center in White City, nursing or retirement homes (large print is good), and summer fire camps. Firefighters love us!

Sometimes a favorite book disintegrates into a pile of pages inside a broken cover, and then what? Maybe a toddler decorates a few pages with an orange crayon, or perhaps someone has torn out page 273. It's time to repurpose!

If not a book, what could it be? A booster seat for a child or a flower press. A vehicle owner's manual is a great travel press. Books can be a door stop, hamster bedding, paperweight, table leveler, or an awesome "domino effect" game covering several rooms. Create origami, carve a book vault for hiding valuables, make printed-word poetry, or explore endless crafts. You can even improve your posture and carriage! The list goes on.



Blackout poetry made from old book pages repurposes damaged or outdated books.

Blackout poetry is achieved by using a black marker and obliterating all the words on the page except those that contribute to your poem. Collage activities could include words and pictures in any combination and with a variety of other materials. Decoupage is collage on three-dimensional surfaces, like picture frames or boxes. Use book pages as watercolor paper and enjoy the effects of painting over words and pictures on a variety of textures. Consider making wallpaper and wrapping paper.

A broken children's dictionary is an endless source of simple pictures for activities, crafts, homemade stickers, and oral story starters. If you happen to have duplicate books, take them apart and alternate one book's even pages with the other's odd pages. Then, string the pages in order on a long fence or twine with clothespins to create a Story Walk you can read as you walk. It is a fun neighborhood or school experience.

And at journey's end? Did you find an old and delightful book in a chic used bookstore, share it with your book club, and take turns reading it over months? Then all your relatives read it, and then baby Lucy got hold of it, and well, it is just plain exhausted? Bury it. Give the moles and worms a chance to devour it even further. Yum! Next spring, plant an apple tree at the site and express your gratitude for all the nourishment that book gave you and others during its long journey.

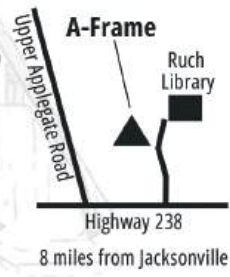
Thalia Truesdell
thaliatruesdell@gmail.com

Nonprofit organizations in the Applegate Valley are welcome to submit news and event information to the Applegater.
Email gater@applegater.org.

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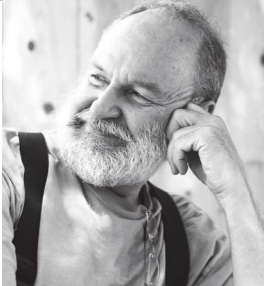
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THE STARRY SIDE

My own story

BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells

What, no star talk? No descriptions of constellations? Oh my!

That’s right. My column this time is a personal description of my relationship with the night sky.

I’ve told you, in a previous column (fall issue, 2023), the story of the grandmother who took me, at six or seven years old, to a beach and intoxicated me with visions, names, and shapes overhead. Ever since, I’ve been fascinated by the night sky, with its stars, planets, and moon.

For about 30 years I’ve expressed to you, in each *Applegater* issue, this love I have for the night sky. Now, at 81 years old, I want to tell you a little more about my personal relationship with these miraculous things.

During most of known human history, there was little light at night besides the stars and moon, which were important and useful to people. Whole civilizations developed around the night sky: calendars, stories, history, names, education. Now, with electricity and lights everywhere, it’s hard to see the night sky—and with so many well-lit, fun things to play with, who needs or even notices it?

But away from towns and roads, a fascinating and beautiful universe moves slowly above us, never quite the same each night or season, sprinkled with surprises

and unknowns and old friends. The more attention I give it, the more gifts it gives me. Finding in it a universality and a connection to our history as a human race, I envision a family outside their cave home, sitting on rocks, looking up, and telling stories about the night sky. Like them, I’m a part of it. We all are.

Today, long-distance telescopes and satellites connect us with the whole continually expanding universe. The

further we see, the more our knowledge increases. Our connection with the universe is getting so deep and amazing, I can’t help but feel a deeper personal connection to it no matter how complicated and huge it appears. It doesn’t matter how little of the universe I see with my night vision—the pictures from those telescopes and satellites deepen my feeling of connection day after day.

I’ve been blessed to live for over 30 years with no lights but my own. It has been such a pleasure to have this close relationship with the universe: this time, this

inspiration, this bunch of celestial friends who show up for me, with me, and above me, night after night. We all sleep through most of the night sky, but I have a meditation practice that gets me up early. Almost every night I take a short walk to look at the sky. Even winter clouds add an important element of mystery and surprise, often performing sleight-of-hand magic: *Did you see it? What was that?*

I know many of you also love this sky. I’m grateful you have enjoyed it with me all these years.

Here’s the illustration for this season. Let’s play around with it. If you’ve got a red night light, you’ll be able to see the illustration and still see the dark sky. If not, study the illustration and then go outside, let your eyes adjust, and see what you can find!

Thank you for indulging me; back to normal next time.

Greeley Wells
greeley@greeley.me

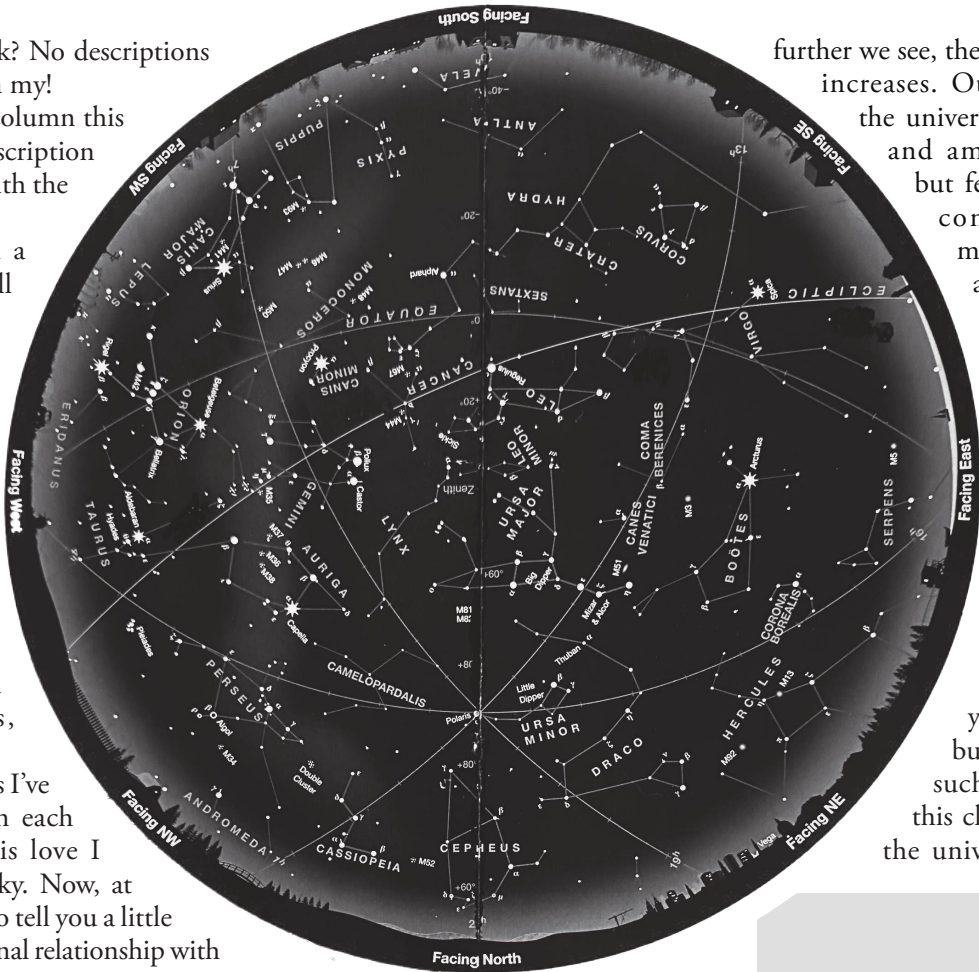


Image: Sky & Telescope (skyandtelescope.org).

— OF NOTE —

Planets

Mercury is visible at dawn in May and August and at dusk in June and July.
Venus shows up in the mornings May through August.
Mars is an evening star throughout the season.
Jupiter shows up in May mornings, is missing in June, is back at dawn in July, and then appears in mornings again in August.
Saturn is in our mornings throughout this season.

Meteors

Delta Aquariids go from May 29 to June 17. At the peak on June 7, there could be 60 per hour in the east before dawn!
The Perseids can, but rarely do, reach up to 90 per hour in perfect conditions and with good luck. Look in the east early mornings of August 11-13 for the best chance. Hold your hand, or anything else, over the moon if it’s up.

Got News?

The *Applegater* welcomes submissions!

We’re your newspaper and want to share your news with readers throughout the Applegate Valley watershed’s many neighborhoods. What’s going on around you? Let us know! Send your write-up and high-resolution photos to gater@applegater.org. Thanks! See you in the *Applegater*....



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I am a forever beginner gardener

BY NOEL RUIZ

I have gardened avidly for 15 years, recognizing gardening as a life passion in my very first season. It resonated deep inside, a “this feels right,” grounding, loving, appreciating kind of feeling. Starting my first garden, I planted seeds, watered them...and they grew! What a miracle! I fell in love with my daily garden visits and fawned over new growth, flowers, and bugs. It felt good to slow down and be present with garden life.

I got better at growing every season, but I didn't start with a green thumb. It was years before I could grow a good tomato. Thankfully, tenacity and passion kept me going. I didn't choose my passion for gardening—it chose me. But tenacity is a choice I keep making so that I can feed my heart the delicious joy of gardening.

I really appreciate my tenacity, because over the years, I've experienced countless crop failures—shallow soil drying out, winter rotting seed, soil not ready for no-till, weeds covering slower growing veggies, seedlings struggling to push through clay “crust,” bugs, turkeys, gophers, squirrels, deer...! My list doesn't end there. I suspect I suppressed a few from memory!

I am writing to you, dear reader, in midspring, when my dreams are at their fullest (dreams born in January over cocoa and seed catalogs). Springtime offers a cozy space to stretch out and enjoy the glory of my magnificent dreams of the most abundant garden ever! Of course, all my plants will thrive, I'll tend everything with ease, there'll be not a blemish on a fruit, not a pest taking over, not a plant

dying, and it will be amazing! By the time you read this summer edition, some of my dreams are most certainly swelling to the point of bursting as real-life gardening reveals its challenges. The biggest dream-pops often set in by early fall, after months of brutal heat and pest pressure. I've learned to budget emotional space to process the inevitable fails in my garden every season. I'm getting better about accepting honest feedback from the garden. It also really helps to talk to well-seasoned gardeners and local farmers. When I hear about *their* crop failures and disasters, I am relieved to know that it's not just me. Did you get the memo? We can't control nature, and uncertainty comes with the dance of life! Regardless of what thrives or doesn't, there is always something to harvest in the garden. Greens and Mediterranean herbs rarely let me down. Perennial fruits, berries, and vegetables are forgiving, and if I can just keep 'em alive a season or two after planting, they reward our family for years. Then there are the weeds...

Weeds are *always* abundant. Dandelion, chickweed, purslane, chicory, and pigweed (wild amaranth) are among my favorites. Weeds always sprout in the garden *without fail!* There they are among my veggies, serving as helpful shade for the soil



Noel Ruiz proudly holding home grown leeks and son.

around my tomatoes' roots—and offering extra leaves and roots to harvest for the stew pot. When a vegetable crop fails? Weeds are vibrant and nutritious. Food as medicine. How wise the weeds are!

Comparing the now-me with the back-then-me, I find some differences. I got better at growing tomatoes. I no longer want to pull out every single weed. I am learning to accept loss in the garden as part of the game. I don't know as much as I thought I did.

What remains the same? The love for quality garden time, the adoration of plants, the wonder for life, the natural slowing down, the ease of breathing in the garden. It was my singing heart that tugged me to keep gardening all those years ago as it does today. The soil, seeds, plants, flowers, birds, worms, and all—they feed my heart.

I appreciate full beds, lush blooms, and abundant harvests like the next gardener. More and more, though, what I'm *really* after are the many micro-moments—the harvests of joy and wonder from quality time in the garden all season long. They add up, you know! To garden—what a blessing.

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Noel offers seeds and writes about homesteading from the heart at homesteadculture.com.

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Community joy at the park

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

The third annual Volunteer and Community Event at Cantrall Buckley Park on April 12 was a resounding success for community members and families who participated, as well as for the volunteer-run nonprofit organizations and groups throughout the Applegate Valley.

A highlight of the event was the performance by students from Ruch Outdoor Community School, directed by Principal Ryan King. Many audience members mentioned feeling “misty-eyed with joy” as they watched the enthusiastic and happy smiles of the children singing. Following this, the local duo “Justaduo” captivated the crowd with their strong, gusty voices that carried their songs throughout the event area.

The children’s activity area was a major attraction for families all afternoon. It was bustling with happy children engaged in art projects, planting willow cuttings, and creating river systems in the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council’s (APWC) Stream Table, a special trailer filled with sand, water, and various items to create miniature stream simulations. Another highlight was the chance to visit the newest fire truck in the Applegate Valley Fire Department’s fleet.

Children had the opportunity to sit in the truck and received special fire helmets and badges.

The crowning moment of the day was when all participating organizations and groups formed a big circle. We spent over an hour learning about each other’s activities and getting to know one another. Sharing our needs led to the decision to work together as a “volunteers collective,” meeting quarterly and developing a plan of focus points important to the entire group. The underlying theme was to help each other and invite guest presenters as needed.

Jim Reiland, a community member and A Greater Applegate board member, and I are developing a survey for the group to determine priorities for the rest of 2025. If there are any other volunteer groups or nonprofits who didn’t make the event or would like to join this “volunteers collective,” please contact me.

Volunteer opportunities around the park

It’s time to care for our Cantrall Buckley Park. We have many designated areas that need weeding, deadheading of flowering species, and planting or replanting of pollinator-friendly plants. Individuals or small groups are welcome to join workdays.



Principal Ryan King leads students from Ruch Outdoor Community School in lively songs, creating a joyful atmosphere to celebrate our community and its dedicated volunteers. Photo: Applegate Partnership.



Liz Shen, Provolt Volunteer Team leader and co-founder of the Applegate After Dark project, brought her lighthearted energy and enthusiasm to the Third Annual Volunteer and Community Event at Cantrall Buckley Park. Photo: Applegate Partnership.

Interpretive sign installations will take place when summer workers are available to assist Brien Dallas, Operations Manager for Jackson County Parks.

The Hiker-Biker Shelter needs its wood frame sealed with a clear coat after the rainy weather has passed. We need a couple of volunteers to help with this task, so please contact me if you’re interested.

Enjoy the wonderful outdoor blooming happenings!

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What is coming up at Pacifica this summer?

BY CLAIR HIGHFIELD

On Saturday, June 7, Pacifica is hosting the Community Rising Folk Music Festival, a fun, family-friendly day filled with live music, kids’ activities, delicious food, vendors, and plenty of chances to hang out with neighbors and friends under the stunning backdrop of the Siskiyou Mountains. It’s a perfect way to spend a day outdoors enjoying music and community. The festival is also a fundraiser to support our Youth Music Studio at Pacifica, where kids and teens can learn and create music.

Pacifica’s Community Rising Folk Music Festival is excited to have Portland’s dynamic trio, Yak Attack, and a variety of local musicians, including Redder than Red, Love Buzz, Frankie Hernandez Band, Kennemer, Ry Michael, The Ant Hill, Coleman Antonucci, Windsong, Ras Gabriel, Jeff Jacobs, Shoshana B, and Bondon. In addition to enjoying music, sights, and food, attendees can participate in a variety of classes, such as rhyming, drumming, yoga, and more. Learn more or buy your ticket at <https://pacificagarden.networkforgood.com/events/86643-community-rising-folk-festival-at-pacifica>.

Pacifica is also offering summer camps to get kids exploring, creating, and having fun in nature. From engineering to horseback riding, from art and nature to creative dance and leadership camps, there’s a camp for every interest and every child. These camps are all about sparking curiosity, developing new skills, and, of course, having a blast while doing it! At Pacifica, we’re all about creating a space

where families can come together to learn, grow, and connect with nature. If you are looking for an activity for the whole family, keep an eye out for the free community art classes we have available, thanks to a grant from the Round House Foundation.

What blossomed over the spring

This past spring, we were busy learning, growing, and connecting with nature in all sorts of exciting ways. Through Pacifica’s Adventures in Learning program, Forest Fridays, field trips, and Pacifica’s Outdoor School, kids, families, and community members have been diving into hands-on learning and experiencing the joy of being part of the land and its changing seasons. We planted our children’s orchard with the help of the Williams Permaculture Club and hosted our first project-based learning field trips, where students planted willow along the creek to reduce erosion, to provide shade for salmon in the creek, and to attract beavers. We hosted a prescribed-burn workshop and our third leadership training for high school students. We are excited to continue to engage in more hands-on restoration projects working with fire and water.

We also offered five Outdoor School sessions for fifth and sixth graders, where kids got outside, learned science through hands-on exploration, and deepened their understanding of the world around them. These adventures in the great outdoors help bring science to life, and we’re thrilled to continue offering experiences like these that inspire curiosity and a love of learning. Oregon is the only state with a free,



Planting the children’s orchard.

statewide Outdoor School program that aims to include every fifth or sixth grader. It is a testament to Oregonians’ love of nature. Pacifica is proud to be an Outdoor School provider! Come visit Pacifica and stay connected!

We’re excited about our accomplishments this spring and are looking forward to an amazing summer. We hope you’ll join us this summer to be a part of our community. From the Community Rising Folk Music Festival to our summer camps, there’s so much to look forward to. We invite you to come, enjoy the beauty of nature, make new friends, and support a cause that helps kids and families thrive. Come play, learn, and grow with us at Pacifica this summer—we can’t wait to see you!

Pacifica is open to the public from dawn to dusk most days. Check our calendar at <https://pacificagarden.org/events/> to make sure there is not a private event and then come on over for a hike, catch-and-release fishing, or to play on the playground. Stay in touch by joining our newsletter at pacificagarden.org.



Roasting over the open fire at a prescribed burn workshop in collaboration with Rogue Valley Prescribed Burn Association.

dm.networkforgood.com/forms/general-mailing-list.

Clair Highfield
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THEY LIVE AMONG US

The convent, the writing, the husbands: Christin Lore Weber talks about her life

BY DIANA COOGLE

Contemplating her 84 years of life, Christin Weber says, “It feels like my whole life has been miraculously impossible.”

Well might she think so. She spent her childhood summers not with other children but with nature, on her grandmother’s resort in the Minnesota wilderness. As a very young child, sitting on a hillock overlooking the lake, she learned to meditate.

In winter, in town, she learned catechism from the Sisters of Saint Joseph. At four, her religious experiences began. At nine, influenced by a beautiful book about convents, she determined to join the Sisters when she turned 12. Alarmed, her mother consulted the priest, who provided some made-up rules—no boyfriends, dietary restrictions, chores—and told Christin she could become an aspirant if she upheld those rules. Christin backpedaled. She wanted a normal childhood.

But she also wanted to be a nun. After high school graduation, she joined the Sisters. Life was difficult at first—strictness, rules, the ban on family contact—but became exciting in college, when she was learning things, meeting people, and doing art. After graduation, she taught English, religion, and drama in a girls’ academy, and then became head of religious education in a large school in Saint Paul. She also met and became friends with Father Patrick Kelly.

It was the era of Vietnam and Vatican II. Rebellion was in the air. These were Christin’s protest days—marching, preaching, and discussing Vatican II with her students.

When she was 32, Christin left the convent. Leaving was as difficult as

entering. The beautiful parts of that life—the deep friendships, the diversity in age and temperament of the Sisters, the 50 acres of woods and farmland they lived on, the bonfires at night; lying on the ground, looking at the stars, listening to a story—were left behind. Christin suffered

from depression, guilt, removal from friends, and having to learn to live on her own.

Pat Kelly had also left the active priesthood. Two years after Christin reentered the world, they married.

“Our marriage was like a halfway house,” Christin says, “between the convent and life in the world.”

After ten years together, Pat Kelly died, unexpectedly, of cancer.

Six weeks after Pat’s death, Christin’s high-school sweetheart, John Weber, called. Though he was working as a traffic controller in Oakland, California, and she was in Minnesota, he stayed in touch. They married a year later.

“This marriage was my initiation into the world as it is,” Christin says.

By this time, she had written a thesis for a Doctor of Ministry degree on psychological pastoral theology. Recognizing her writing talent, John Weber offered to be her patron and give her the freedom to write.



Sister Mary Christopher (now Christin Weber, left) and Sister Stephen Marie in a wheat field at the Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Crookston, Minnesota, circa 1959.



Christin Lore Weber

Caring Community: A Design for Ministry launched her career in 1983, but her breakthrough book, she says, was *Woman Christ*, a book of feminist theology describing Christ as “the mergence of the Divine with the human in all of us.” Though it was widely read by women, some theologians, including a bishop, rejected it.

Her most-read book is *Finding Stone: A Quiet Parable and Soul-Work Meditation*. Her first novel, *Altar Music*, was an *LA Times* Best Book of the Year in 2000. Her favorite of her books is *No This But This*, a novel of reflections on “the everyday mysteries of a woman’s life.” Her latest is *Observances: A Memoir of Poems*, written to and in response to writers who have influenced her life (my favorite).

After living in California’s East Bay, then Port Townsend, John and Christin moved to the Applegate. In 2008, John died of the cancer that had plagued him since 2003.

Two years after John died, Christin read John Sack’s book, *Yearning for the Father*. Recognizing correlations with her own studies, she contacted him. After many deep discussions and realizing how much they enjoyed each other’s company and intellects, they married in 2011. John moved into Christin’s Applegate home, Casa Chiara, where they live a “semi-cloistered, hermitage-like writing life,” meditating daily and enjoying the peaceful, oak-savannah hillside of their home.

The Minnesota wilderness, the convent, the teaching and writing, the husbands—it’s no wonder Christin feels like her life has been miraculously impossible. The only way to make sense of it, she says, is to write about it. “A thing is impossible till I find the words for it,” she says. “Then I get it.”

Diana Coogle • diana@applegater.org
Editor’s note: Know someone we should feature in “They Live Among Us”? Contact Diana with your suggestions.



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Elemental equilibrium

BY AARON KRIKAVA

This issue’s elemental theme, “Fire and Water,” had me contemplating fire and its place among the four classic elements, both how it relates to and differs from the other elements. Water, air, and earth feel more like tangible objects or materials to me. In contrast, fire is more ephemeral. It’s a process, it’s the element of change, it’s the release of energy, it’s the dynamic equilibrium of nature. Fire combines with the other three elements as a natural process. The basic chemical equation of combustion demonstrates this relationship clearly.

At its simplest, combustion combines oxygen (air) with plant matter like trees, brush, grass, or any hydrocarbon (the earth element) and changes those elements into H₂O (water), carbon dioxide (air), and energy (fire).

Earth + Air = Water + Air + Fire

When this reaction begins, whether from lightning striking a dry forest, your match lighting your woodstove, or the spark plug in your car’s engine igniting gasoline, the energy released causes a chain reaction, allowing the process to continue until one of the elements is depleted and the combustion stops. Interestingly, the reverse of the chemical equation of combustion is photosynthesis!

The chemical reaction of photosynthesis combines energy from the sun (fire) with carbon dioxide (air) and H₂O (water) and changes them into oxygen (air) and plant matter or hydrocarbons (earth).

Fire + Air + Water = Air + Earth

We see that the process of photosynthesis is the reverse of the process of combustion. The way in which these two processes are balanced leads directly to the effects of wildfire and our experience of it. Whenever the sun is shining, the process of photosynthesis

occurs (as long as temperatures are above freezing). This process allows us to have beautiful forests, woodlands, fields, flowers, and food—the natural bounty of our valley and our lives. As this plant matter builds up from photosynthesis, the natural balance is maintained through the process of combustion. How much plant matter has accumulated—and the weather conditions when fire occurs—determine how intensely we experience the element of fire.

This is why activities like pile burning and understory burning are so critical to maintaining the natural balance and health of our forests. Low- to moderate-intensity fire on a regular basis is much less destructive than high-intensity fire that occurs rarely. Regular, low-intensity fire is beneficial to our natural ecosystems, as it cycles nutrients, germinates native flower seeds, and invigorates perennials as fresh, nutritious browse for animals.

When we consider this elemental balancing act—photosynthesis creating plant matter, combustion changing it back to base elements—it’s clear that fire is as important and necessary for the health of nature as all the other elements: air, water, and earth.

We can’t, and shouldn’t, stop all fire from occurring, anymore than we can (or should!) stop the rain from falling or the wind from blowing. For our part in this natural equilibrium, we have a responsibility to actively use fire—safely and appropriately—for the health and resilience of our community and landscape.

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Wildfire risk in the Applegate: Partnership leads to protection

BY NATHAN GEHRES

Residents of the Applegate Valley, and local organizations and agencies, are working hard to prepare for the upcoming fire season. The elevated wildfire risk is increasingly evident, as homeowners’ insurance becomes unaffordable, summertime smoke disrupts plans and forces residents indoors, and anxiety rises with the temperatures. Big challenges require robust partnerships, such as those being forged in the Applegate.

Collaboration is essential, as the diversity that makes the Applegate unique also complicates the implementation of large projects. Our valley spans two states, three counties, and three fire districts in a checkerboard of private and public lands. Because permits and other requirements vary across land ownerships and wildfires don’t recognize property boundaries, pooling resources in an “All-Lands” approach is the only viable way to reduce wildfire risk across the landscape.

The Applegate Valley Fuels Management Taskforce (AVFMT) is a collaborative effort between the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC) and the Applegate Valley Fire District (AVFD). This partnership has developed a wildfire risk reduction program that offers technical and financial assistance to landowners.

APWC brought together a diverse coalition of non-governmental organizations, agencies, and community-based partners in developing the Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project (UAAWRP), securing \$2 million in funding through the Natural Resource Conservation Service’s (NRCS) Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS). The NRCS, a federal agency, works with private landowners to improve soil, water, and natural resource conservation on working lands. Additional funding for the UAAWRP has been secured by AVFMT through a \$2 million grant from the US Department of Agriculture, as well as hundreds of thousands in funding from Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) grants. The project is designed to reduce hazardous fuels on private lands, build landscape-scale wildfire resilience, support the economy by employing local contractors, and contribute to long-term ecosystem health and habitat connectivity across the valley.

The ODF Southwest Oregon District is nearing the completion of a three-year effort through the Western State Fire Managers grant to reimburse landowners for defensible space creation, fuels-reduction treatments, and improvement of access and egress routes on private lands.

Firebrand Resiliency Collective’s Ready NOW Program (Neighborhoods Organized for Wildfire) is dedicated to empowering communities in wildfire-prone areas to prepare for and mitigate wildfire risks. Firebrand has partnered with AVFMT to establish and support new Firewise USA® communities, conduct home wildfire risk assessments, and incentivize home hardening measures that align with broader defensible space efforts.

The Rogue Forest Partners (RFP), a partnership of four federal (NRCS, USFS, BLM, USFWS), two state (ODF and OSU Extension Service), and four nonprofit organizations, has worked for the last five years on the Upper Applegate Watershed (UAW) project, completing over 17,000 acres of understory restoration thinning since 2019, with an additional 8,700 acres of pile and underburning. These



Applegate Valley Fire District assists US Forest Service (USFS) with a prescribed burn along Upper Applegate Road, near Jackson Campground, on April 23, 2025. Photo: Lindsey Negherbon, USFS Fire Ecologist.



USFS crew performs mop-up actions on a prescribed burn along Upper Applegate Road, which help protect this important evacuation route. Photo: Kristofer Colbenson, USFS.

treatments were strategically located near private lands and roadways. In Williams, RFP completed 278 acres of understory restoration treatments.

The Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative (SOFRC), a member of the RFP, completed the Prescription for Safety Project (P4S) with BLM and ODF funding. The project treated fuels on 242 acres across 31 properties along Sterling Creek, Little Applegate, and Humbug Creek Roads, helping to secure egress and ingress for residents and firefighters.

In addition to the projects listed above, the BLM has several active and planned projects in the Applegate Valley. The Bear Grub Project, for example, calls for 3,381 acres of small diameter thinning and hazardous fuels reduction, 898 acres of which have been completed, with another 802 planned for 2025. The Strategic Operations for Safety (SOS) Project, with planned fuels treatments targeted near private lands, is slated to start in late 2025.

In addition to the RFP project listed above, the USFS has plans to utilize prescribed fire to enhance the treatments in the UAW and to protect the US Army Corps of Engineers infrastructure around the Applegate Dam. The USFS is also developing the Yellowjacket Project to connect the fuels reduction work in the UAW with the previous work around Ashland and RFP’s West Bear Project near Jacksonville.

Several organizations in the Applegate are proactively working to decrease the threat of uncharacteristically severe wildfire, because doing nothing is not an option.

If you have questions, please contact me at the email or phone number listed below.

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THROUGH THE LEPIDOPTERAN LENS

Beautiful Juba

BY LINDA KAPPEN

The Juba Skipper, *Hesperia juba*, belongs to the butterfly family of skippers, *Hesperiidae*. It is one of the largest of the grass skippers, reaching up to 1.5 inches. Varying in colors—orange, light brown, and olive—the Juba also has distinct, toothed, black, inward-facing markings on the wing borders, which meet with the orangish veins on the dorsal view. Ventral views of both sexes show bright whitish markings on the hind wing and on the apex of the forewing. A greenish tinge of hair covers the body, slightly extending the color translucently in the bright sunlight.

The male Juba perches on grassy slopes and in gullies, awaiting females. The egg is laid on bunchgrasses, which include *Bromus* and *Dechampsia* species, as well as the non-native *Poa pratensis*



Dorsal view of the Juba Skipper.

(Kentucky bluegrass). The Juba Skipper can be bivoltine, meaning two broods or generations within the flight period, though sometimes the eggs or early instar larvae will overwinter. In southern Oregon we experience two broods in flight, from early April to early or mid-October.

Their habitats are open dry woodlands, grassy oak woodlands, roadsides, and



Ventral view of a Juba Skipper found at Sampson Creek Preserve.

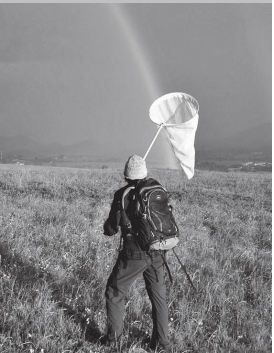
canyons, to name a few. Nectaring occurs on yarrow, rabbitbrush, and many native wildflowers or flowering shrubs or trees. Males will visit mud for nutrients. The Juba

Skipper's range is from British Columbia to southern California and from Montana to New Mexico.

I took these photos during a butterfly survey at Sampson Creek Preserve of the Selberg Institute in southern Oregon. The day turns magical when I spy a bright fresh Juba from a small distance, perched on grasses or flowers. Their size, greenish bodies, and bright white markings make Jubas easy to recognize and to appreciate for their beauty.

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Photos by Linda Kappen



Linda Kappen

How to burn a pile with minimum smoke

BY MARK HAMLIN

Burning forest and landscape trimmings is common in the Applegate. To avoid an escaped fire, homeowners usually wait for wetter winter conditions; however, wet burns have negative consequences, including excessive smoke, difficult ignitions, and extra labor. Safe burning opportunities between dry and wet conditions minimize the undesirable consequences of a wet burn.

Timing is the key to an excellent burn. Dry wood burns more readily than wet wood, but a dry forest risks a fire escape. Ideal conditions for pile burning exist when the forest is too wet to burn but the piled wood is dry enough to burn readily.

For example, two large but hazardous pine trees were felled in the spring of 2024. The logs were hauled off for milling. To create a pile of slash ready to burn in the fall, boughs were stacked about two feet high, making a readily burnable base. Log remnants, less than 12 inches in diameter, were then stacked on top of the base. More boughs and yard trimmings were added until the pile was the size of a delivery van. The pile was left to dry through the summer.

Fuel moisture in fine fuels changes quickly from wet to dry, or vice versa. However, larger-diameter fuels change more slowly. Densely packed fine fuels in a pile can be dry enough to burn, even when dispersed fine fuels in the landscape will not carry a fire. Additionally, large-diameter pieces, dried through the summer, burn readily once ignited. We used these facts to determine optimal burn conditions.

The optimal burn day occurred in November 2024, after 2.5 inches of rain had wetted the forest, followed by a week of cool, drying temperatures. When the next storm arrived, and after the rain started, the pile was ignited. Conditions were perfect. The surrounding forests were in a low fire-hazard condition—too wet to burn, in fact. Yet, after the preceding week of dry weather, the densely packed fine fuel in the pile burned

readily, as did the logs. The photos show the results.

Spring burning conditions are different. Spring's advantage is that green grass is not going to burn readily, in contrast to the dry grass and dry forest of the fall. Therefore, spring burning is generally less risky due to typically higher fuel moisture. However, greater spring moisture also means more smoke and sometimes incomplete consumption. This is why spring burning is best suited for fuels less than eight inches in diameter. Additionally, drying the fuels for a few weeks will promote flammability, lessen smoke, and contribute to full consumption.

Covering the pile with a plastic tarp enables burning in wet conditions—remove the tarp in the dead of winter and ignite. Even covering only part of the pile with a tarp enables ignition in wetter conditions. If possible, select an open area for the burn pile and consider where the



Large fuel, dried through the summer, is consumed in a fall burn. Note the minimal smoke. Photo: Mark Hamlin.



Results of a November burn after the fuel was dried throughout the summer. Photo: Mark Hamlin.

prevailing wind will push the flames. A steel rake can be used to consolidate the pile as it burns down. If available, a garden hose is good for damping the flames in the early stages, but it may not be sufficient to douse a raging pile.

Two regulations must be followed. First, on the day of the burn, call the Jackson County "daily burn status" line at 541-776-7007 or the Josephine County "daily burn status" line at 541-476-9663. Burn day forecasts are not available, but incoming low-pressure systems often create permitted burn-day conditions. Second, check with the Oregon

Department of Forestry or your local fire department for any burning restrictions. In Jackson and Josephine counties, fire restrictions are typically removed sometime in October, and then reinstated around June 1.

If you're in doubt about the safety of lighting a pile, wait until a little rain has wetted the landscape. The principle is to burn relatively dry wood when the landscape is too wet to burn. If you want some coaching, consult your local fire department.

Mark Hamlin
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BIRD EXPLORER

Rufous Hummingbird

BY HEATHER PALADINI

The most common hummingbird in Oregon is the Rufous Hummingbird, *Selasphorus Rufus*. We begin seeing them in the Applegate Valley in spring, as they return from their overwintering grounds in Mexico to spend the warmer months here.

The Rufous Hummingbird is known for being one of the feistiest hummingbirds. It is incredibly territorial and defensive and can scare away birds many times its size with its dive-bombing attack. Rufous Hummingbirds, which measure about three inches in length, exhibit sexual dimorphism, which means there are noticeable differences between adult males and females. Adult males are almost entirely a rusty, or rufous, orange, with a bright white chest and a fiery red and iridescent throat, which they use to attract mates and deter predators and intruders. Some adult males have iridescent green on their backs, while their female counterparts are mostly green with rusty flanks and patches of rust on their green tails, with a bright white chest.

In the spring, Rufous Hummingbirds live along the West Coast in northern California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and parts of Idaho and Montana. They overwinter to the south in Mexico. The Rufous Hummingbird has the longest

migratory journey of all birds, relative to its body size, traveling over 3,000 miles one-way from as far north as Alaska to Mexico.

Rufous Hummingbirds depend on nectar and insects as their primary food source. Therefore, they migrate to warmer climes in the fall and winter as nectar and insects become scarce in their northern range.

Their springtime northward migration aligns with the blooming of our native manzanita shrubs, *Arctostaphylos*, a family of plants in the Ericaceae, or heather, family. Rufous Hummingbirds and manzanita have a strong mutualistic relationship. Manzanita's early-blooming flower is a favorite food of the Rufous Hummingbird. The small, bell-shaped flowers with their tubular structure are the perfect shape for their long, slender bills, and the flowers provide the nectar that hummingbirds need to sustain them on their journey and to prepare for the breeding season. In return, hummingbirds help pollinate the manzanita. Thus, each ensures the other's survival in perpetuity.



Rufous Hummingbird. Photo: Anne Goff.

Rufous Hummingbirds begin nesting between April and July, depending on the climate of their locality. Their nests are tiny, only about 1.5 inches across, and are made of bark, moss, and lichen, filled with soft downy fluff like that of thistle, and glued together with spiderwebs. Their little white eggs are the size of jellybeans and are laid in clutches of two or three.

The Rufous Hummingbird's enhanced spatial memory helps it remember the locations of specific flowers and feeders from one year to the next, making it a rather efficient collector of nectar. Like all hummingbirds, the Rufous is an important pollinator, playing a role in the reproduction of many flowering plants. It is a food source for many predatory birds, including hawks and owls.

Unfortunately, the population of the Rufous Hummingbird has declined 67 percent since 1970, due to a variety of mostly human-induced conditions: habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and pesticide use.

Attract hummingbirds to your garden

If you want to attract more Rufous Hummingbirds to your garden, remember that, as with any pollinator, they need sources of food, shelter, shade, and water.

Hummingbirds are attracted to bright red, pink, and orange colors. This is why most hummingbird feeders are bright red. Please note that nectar from flowers is not red, even when the flower is red; it is the bright red flower that attracts the hummingbird to the nectar, so the "nectar" in the feeder need not be red. In fact, red dye can be harmful to hummingbirds. You can easily make your own nectar by mixing one part sugar with four parts water, stirring until the sugar is dissolved.

Even better, you can create a more ideal hummingbird habitat by adding nectar-rich, tubular-shaped flowers that are orange, pink, and red to your garden and green spaces. Some varieties to consider are honeysuckle, bee balm, columbine, hummingbird sage, red flowering currant, Oregon grape—and don't forget the manzanita.

Heather Paladini
heather47bear@gmail.com

Summer update from Star Ranger Station

Happy summer to the Applegate community and our valued partners!

Over the past several months, Forest Service (FS) staff have undergone quite a few transitions. While it's always bittersweet to say goodbye to colleagues, we're excited for them as they move on to new adventures. One change that will directly impact the Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District (SMRD) is the upcoming retirement of District Ranger Jen Sanborn, effective June 1. Jen has dedicated 36 years to federal service, primarily here in southern Oregon. Her career has been split between the Bureau of Land Management's Medford District and the U.S. Forest Service on the Fremont-Winema and Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forests.

With all the changes, two questions commonly arise about recreation access and wildfire response this summer. We're happy to share that recreation and district crews have been working hard preparing for the season—clearing roads, prepping campsites, and removing hazardous trees near campgrounds, trailheads, and day-use areas. Most campgrounds opened by May 1. Some services, like bathroom cleaning and maintenance, may happen less frequently this summer.

On the wildfire front, we're in good shape. Our engines are fully staffed, and we're prepared for the season ahead.

Beginning mid-June, crews will shift to seven-day staffing schedules. Dutchman Lookout will also be staffed, depending on snow levels. When not engaged in fire suppression or critical training, fire crews will also support high-priority fuels-reduction projects across the district.

In May, we removed the gate on Forest Service Road 1050 (Elliott Creek Road), near the private inholding known as Joe Bar. The chain of locks and the privately sourced gate post will be available for pickup at the Star Ranger Station. Removing the gate has reopened access to several trailheads and around 45 square miles of public lands.

We will also be installing a new gate on Forest land along the 1060 Road to restrict motorized access to the Blue Ledge Mine Superfund Site.

Project Updates

Upper Applegate Watershed Restoration Project (UAWRP) Environmental Assessment. This spring, pile-burning activities were conducted as part of the UAWRP. While broader project work is temporarily on pause, we have completed the planning and groundwork needed for long-term restoration goals. For more information, including maps, visit fs.usda.gov/r06/rogue-siskiyou/projects/archive/52305.

Thompson (formerly Grayback) Shaded Fuel Break Categorical

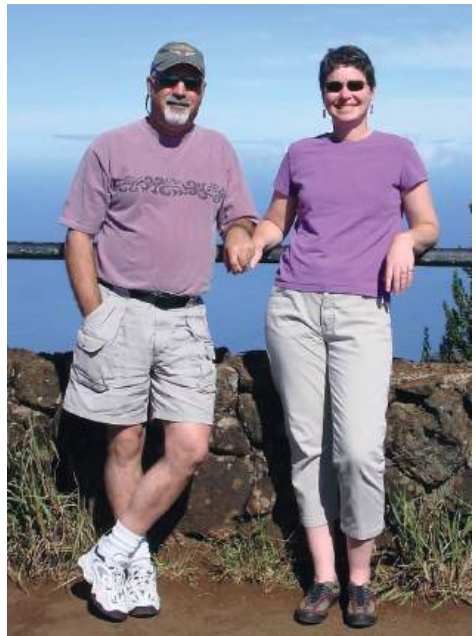
Exclusion. This important fuels-reduction project along FS Roads 1010 and 1020 proposes thinning, piling, pile burning, and under burning on approximately 1,000 acres. Community input has been vital to project development. Remaining environmental surveys are scheduled for completion this year. We hope to have a decision signed by winter 2025, with implementation potentially beginning next spring. For project details, visit fs.usda.gov/r06/rogue-siskiyou/projects/63141.

Yellowjacket Environmental Assessment (formerly Little Applegate EA). The Yellowjacket project aims to strengthen landscape resilience to wildfire while connecting fuels reduction work across the Upper Applegate Watershed and Ashland Forest Resiliency Project areas. It also supports local economies through timber production. The project is moving forward under an Emergency Action Determination, in alignment with Executive Order 14225, *Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production* (March 1, 2025).

So far, project teams have been refining the scope of work through field visits and site evaluations. Public involvement opportunities will be offered once a more detailed plan is finalized. Stay tuned!

Staying Informed

GovDelivery: Our primary communication tool for project updates and news. Customize your subscription at public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAFS/subscriber/new. Need help?



Jen Sanborn (right) with her husband Doug (left).

Contact Amanda Merz at amanda.merz@usda.gov.

Forest Webpage: Our website was recently updated. Our new homepage is: fs.usda.gov/r06/rogue-siskiyou. View current and recent projects at fs.usda.gov/r06/rogue-siskiyou/projects.

Rogue River Siskiyou National Forest (RRSNF) Facebook Page: Follow us for highlights, updates, and forest happenings at facebook.com/R6RRSNF.

We're looking forward to a safe and enjoyable summer and hope to see you out in the forest!


For more information, contact Molly Juillerat at molly.juillerat@usda.gov.



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The Applegate ahead

BY MEGAN FEHRMAN

Water, fire, new seasons—they all usher in transitions and renewal. As summer approaches, we at A Greater Applegate (AGA) are welcoming new members to our team, announcing new projects and resources for the community, and taking a new look at where we are headed in the next few years.

We are thrilled to bring Chris Loeffler on board as our Applegate Business Network Manager. A southern Oregon resident for over 25 years, Chris made the Applegate his forever home in 2024. Chris has worked for some of the biggest brands in the world, as well as some of the most treasured southern Oregon small businesses. His goal in his new position at AGA is to strengthen business and community connections and bring greater resources into the valley through thoughtful partnerships and a robust resource network.

Chris will be working with businesses to develop and promote the new Local Business Directory on ApplegateConnect.org. He will also partner with Jackson County's Business Librarian to create a Rural Entrepreneurs in Residence Mentorship program, featuring one artist and one farmer who will serve as teachers and coaches for cohorts of new business owners this fall and winter. We'll also be launching a "stay local" challenge as we showcase the best the Applegate has to offer during the Jacksaphine Count(r)y Fair week in September.

You can find our new and improved Wildfire and Emergency Resource page at ApplegateConnect.org. With fire season approaching, this is a one-stop (online)

shop for all things related to emergency preparedness, protecting your property, and responding to a disaster. This site has been developed by Tucker Grinnan, AGA's Resilience Hubs Coordinator, and vetted by our fire departments and other experts in the field via the AV (Applegate Valley) Forest and Fire Working Group. Videos from the presentations at last spring's All Things Fire Fair are available on AGA's YouTube channel, including a helpful presentation on property insurance, prescriptions for safety, advice for keeping access and escape routes safe, and reminders of what we can all do to become a more fire-adapted community.

AGA is working with community members in Ruch and Williams to set up a localized network of support, should an emergency occur. These conversations are being woven into the Community Wildfire Protection Plan update spearheaded by the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council. We are proud to be part of the collaborative effort.

Speaking of collaborative efforts, the Outdoor Recreation Working Group is happy to announce that the online recreation planner is now live on WanderApplegate.com! This interactive site allows you to plan family outings and find the trails, parks, the river, and local businesses. We're still adding a few more resources to the map, but it is live and ready for you to use, so please check it out before your next outdoor adventure.

You may have received our *State of A Greater Applegate* impact report in the mail. You can also find it online at agreaterapplegate.org, along with our

Applegate Wildfire and Emergency Resources Page



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Wildfire and Emergency Resources page on ApplegateConnect.org.

slideshow from the State of the Applegate event last February, the completed economic-drivers research, and a report on our local business survey.

Community building is about nurturing connections, building capacity, taking community-led action, and fostering a culture of rural resilience, hope, and vitality. Please support A

Greater Applegate, if you can, so that we can continue to support community-based projects, lift up our local businesses, and create more uniquely Applegate experiences in 2025!

Megan Fehrman, Co-Executive Director
A Greater Applegate
541-702-2108
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THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAIN ADVOCATE

Logging, landslides, and the future of forests in the Applegate Valley

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

In the last few issues of the *Applegater*, I have written about the Medford District BLM's so-called "salvage" logging proposals in the Applegate Valley. This past spring, the impact of these projects became far more evident, even to the casual observer.

Perhaps you have recently hiked the Jack-Ash/Sterling Ditch Trail system in the Little Applegate River watershed and looked across the canyon to the recently clearcut slopes of the BLM's Lickety Split Timber Sale? Or perhaps, this spring, you noticed fresh logging while driving along Highway 238 at Forest Creek? This is the Forest Creek Salvage Timber Sale, which proposed retaining only 4.6 trees per acre and caused immense damage to lower Forest Creek. Maybe you took a drive on Upper Applegate Road and noticed the fresh clear-cuts across the river from Star Ranger Station, as well as above Eastside Road, on the western face of Cinnabar Ridge, part of the Boaz Salvage Timber Sale. By the time this article is published, you may have seen fresh logging above Buncom, in the Little Applegate. According to the agency's Timber Sale Prospectus, the Boaz Salvage Timber Sale has retained, on average, only 3.3 trees per acre.

Based on the faulty assumption that these clear-cuts and heavy industrial logging projects would have no significant environmental effects, the BLM approved these projects with no public involvement, no public comment, and no scientific and environmental review. However, what has been implemented are some of the most damaging logging projects on BLM land in the Applegate Valley in decades.



The clear-cut slopes, landslide, and debris flow in unit 27-4 of the Boaz Salvage Timber Sale above Eastside Road in the Upper Applegate Valley. Photo: Applegate Siskiyou Alliance.



Another view of the clear-cut slopes in unit 27-4 of the Boaz Salvage Timber Sale. Photo: Applegate Siskiyou Alliance.

The Boaz Salvage Timber Sale was logged between January and March 2025, during heavy rain and snow events. The Applegate Siskiyou Alliance (ASA) repeatedly reached out to the BLM with documentation of wet-weather

logging activities that were not authorized to take place between October 15 and May 15, when soil saturation levels exceeded 25 percent or when these activities transport sediment into streams. Unfortunately, the BLM failed to respond to our requests to suspend these damaging, wet-weather logging activities. Then, on March 16, 2025, during heavy rain, the clearcut slopes in Unit 27-4 gave way, triggering a landslide and debris flow that filled the seasonal stream below with mud, stumps, and logging debris.

The BLM also recently proposed the Strategic Operations for Safety (SOS) Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA) to expand these sorts of damaging logging projects across southwest Oregon. However, in the face of significant opposition, the agency canceled the project in April 2025. Unfortunately, the BLM has decided instead to log approximately 3,000 acres across the Applegate Valley in the newly proposed Ashland 2025 SOS EA, using similar prescriptions and criteria as recent "salvage" logging projects in our area. Although the prescription claims that the stands are "dead and dying," the new SOS project would heavily log living, green stands that survived the recent beetle outbreaks. The timber sale also appears to propose logging in some stands with more

pronounced mortality; however, even in these stands, many living, green, and viable trees are proposed for removal.

The Ashland 2025 SOS Project would include logging on Thompson Creek, on China Gulch, in the Wellington Wildlands, on the eastern face of Ben Johnson Mountain above Cantrall Buckley Park, along the East Applegate Ridge Trail, on Woodrat Mountain, and on Sterling Creek. In recent months, ASA has reviewed units marked for logging in the SOS Project and found that these stands regularly contain living, mature trees, and in some places, late-successional forest. Additionally, the timber sale markings show that the BLM intends to heavily log many large-diameter trees, some over 30 inches in diameter and likely more than 150 years old.

What has been proposed is not "salvage" logging, nor will it reduce fire risks or increase forest health. In fact, the opposite will occur if the project is implemented. The BLM is proposing to log some of the last mature forest habitats in our region and to forever change the scenic viewscapes of the Applegate Valley. We encourage our neighbors who are not yet directly affected by BLM "salvage" logging to take a drive and view these recent timber sales above the Upper Applegate and Little Applegate Valley. Is this responsible forest management? Is this how we want our valley to look? Clear-cut slopes above our farms, vineyards, and homes? At ASA, we say no—it is not what we want our valley to look like. If you agree, please reach out to help us stop the SOS Project!

Luke Ruediger
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Transformative powers of community

JCC's practical answers to life's big questions

BY JULIE RAEFIELD

Summer—what a great time to reflect and restart. While sitting by a stream and chewing on some grass, you might begin to entertain thoughts that lead to some pretty big questions.

- What am I here for?
- Is there a higher purpose to my life?
- How do I leave a lasting legacy?
- Can I make a difference in a world with so many challenges?

- Who will remember me?
- How can I deepen my creative self?
- How do I give back for all that I have been given?
- How do I connect with others?
- How can I take better care of myself?

While you may think that these are the kinds of questions that need quiet and solitude to answer, there is an alternative route to find some powerful answers.



Friends from Jacksonville Garden Club tended JCC's pollinator garden and refreshed its design.

When we engage with others, we have daily opportunities to pose these questions and respond with personal actions, which often become the answers we hope to find.

At Jacksonville Community Center (JCC), our volunteers, donors, teachers (most of whom volunteer), and class and event participants are actively engaging in meaningful connections with others.

- They are donating time to ensure our community's children experience the beauty of art, nature, music, and play.

See TRANSFORMATIVE POWERS, page 21.

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with Tami Quinn Hollenbeck

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If you are looking for a well pump, consider the depth of the well, GPM, elevation to the house & desired water pressure.

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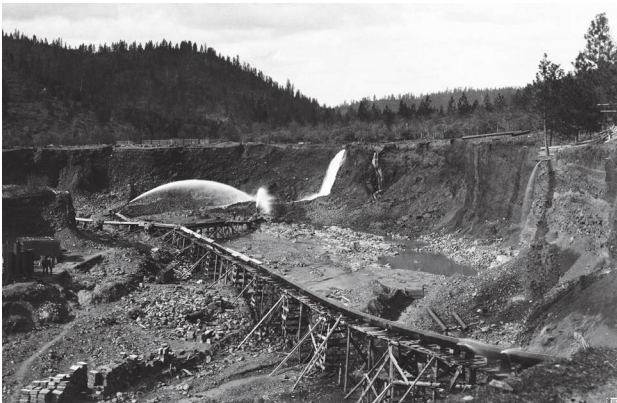
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Finding forgotten waters

BY LAURA B. AHEARN

On March 8, 2025, McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) launched a History Buffs Movie Series, open to the public free of charge. The first viewing was the 1914 film, *Grace's Visit to the Rogue River Valley*. This silent movie was made by wealthy orchardists on a hand-cranked 35mm Ernemann camera. The orchard boom had busted, and the film was shown at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in an effort to revitalize Medford and the surrounding area. Grace was Alice Grace Andrews, a true Broadway actress who had married bond broker and orchard owner Conro Fiero in 1910. She wasn't visiting; her home was Woodlawn, the Tudor-style mansion in Central Point, which later became the upscale Mon Desir restaurant.

What makes this movie so special for us in the Applegate? It shows the hydraulic "giants" at the Sterling Mine in action, with water blasting at maximum force in the spring! Like the Sturgis Mine on Forest Creek, the tumbling cliffs and raging sluices were tourist attractions from the



Sterling Mine (Southern Oregon Historical Society #5086).



Lowden Falls, northwest of today's Applegate Dam.

1880s through the 1920s, at least during spring melts when water was plentiful. This truly unique and powerful footage has never been properly identified or promoted as Sterling Creek. If you missed the March 8 viewing, you can watch an abbreviated clip in the Virtual Museum on the MBHS website at mckeebridge.org/virtual-history-museum (click Sterling Creek/Sterlingville).

The History Buffs Movie Series will "take a vacation" for the summer. We expect to resume the series in October on the second Saturday each month, 3-4:30 pm, at the Ruch Library.

Another intriguing and forgotten water feature was brought to our attention by Ben Truwe at the Southern Oregon Historical Society: a stereoscopic image of "Lowden Falls" at Watkins, i.e., today's Applegate Lake. Even old-timers don't recall these "falls." We believe these cascades were leaks from the Grand Applegate Ditch. According to the article "Oregon's Chinese Heritage: A Legacy of Places," "the six-mile-long, north-flowing Grand Applegate Ditch diverted water from Carberry Creek to the Grand Applegate hydraulic mine. Chinese laborers constructed the canal during the winter of 1878-1879. The claim itself was purchased by a Chinese mining company in 1886." Efforts started a few years ago to build a hiking trail along the remnants of this ditch, providing a scenic route from Applegate Lake to the Gin Lin National Recreation Trail.

These waters were called "Lowden Falls" because John Lowden's ranch was situated where the French Gulch flowed into Big Applegate. He sold the property to Patrick Swayne in 1910, for whom "Swayne Lookout," immediately south of the dam, is named.

Want to learn more? Visit our Virtual Museum at mckeebridge.org. Donations to support our work to collect and preserve our Applegate heritage are much appreciated!

Laura B. Ahearn • 458-226-0666
Mckeebridge1917@gmail.com

Applegate Museum: A walk through time

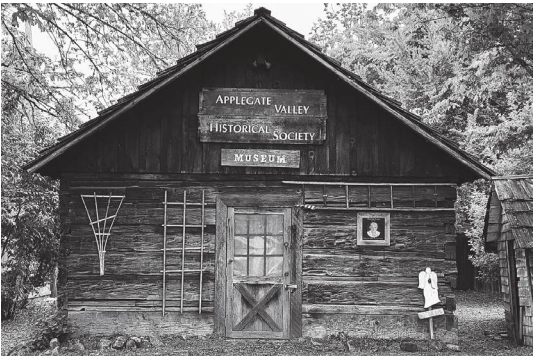
BY JAMES "BUCK" REINDERS

There is an exceptionally old building in the Applegate that has remained hidden behind fencing and brambles for many years, but now, a series of renovations has brought change right to its doorstep. A little front yard has been cleared, pulling back the green shadows and bringing a piece of local history back into the daylight, into view of the public eye. The Applegate Museum once again fronts Highway 238 and quietly testifies that some things don't change. Even as the traffic whizzes past, fences come and go, and the river flows, this old building remains. It's a sanctuary in the middle of town; a place where time slows down enough for us to connect with history and those who have lived through it.

The members of the Applegate Valley Historical Society (AVHS) are the stewards of the museum. Each member has lived in the valley long enough to know our local history firsthand. Some, like Steve Decker and Barbara Niedermeyer, have lived here their whole lives. Others, such as AVHS President Janis Tipton, moved here as a young adult, but even that was a lifetime ago. Despite being decades into retirement age, Janis and her fellow board members are not your average batch of retirees. It's true that their latest meeting, at the

Applegate Branch library, started a tad late because of a self-professed "senior moment" (someone couldn't find their keys), and yes, there were home-baked cookies to hand around, but there was also an intensity circling about the table as they discussed their major concern: the lawsuit that threatens to revoke the Society's ownership of the small plot of land the museum sits upon. This ownership was granted to them back in the early 90s on the condition that the land be used as a site for the historic building.

After the board meeting brief, one of the members, Maryanna, offered to give visitors a tour of the museum. She arrived at the small building first and sat inside, waiting to begin. Her clothing was playfully patterned in a full range of colors. Behind her hung a giant black-and-white photo album on the aged-gray cabin wall. She was familiar with the not-so-temporary exhibit and stayed in her seat while telling stories about the artifacts around her, adding to the cozy feeling inside the museum. Some of the exhibit is dedicated to the building itself. There is literature documenting its original use as



a farm store serving the Applegate way back in the 1860s, and its subsequent adventures since then. The hand-hewn logs that form its walls display their own record, nicked across the lines of their time-hardened grain.

Maryanna answered some questions about herself too. Turns out, for decades she owned and managed the Applegate Store, the current one, right across the street. So she was sitting inside the predecessor of the store that was once hers, yet this building was retired long before she ever set up shop. It appeared that layers of history develop one upon the other. Timber-framed by the doorway and backed in black-and-white (the walls, the cast iron stove, the photographs—all shades of gray), Maryanna became the colorful focal point in a portrait of living history.

Perhaps you will feel inspired, in your own way, when you visit the museum. Its door will be open during each Applegate Evening Market, and a member of the AVHS will be there to welcome you. This historical space could host a variety of events and exhibits organized by the community. It's a critically important time to support the Society as it continues its efforts to preserve this building as a resource for the neighborhood.

James "Buck" Reinders
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THE GRAPES OF CATH

Put a cork in it! Or screw it!

BY CATHY A. RODGERS

I don't know about you, but I've been a little stressed lately. There certainly seems to be plenty to "wine" about. Thankfully, the Applegate Valley is here to serve. So, pour your heart out and enjoy my new *Applegater* wine column, "The Grapes of Cath," focusing on local vineyards and the wine industry.

How to start? I opened a bottle of RiverCrest wine, let it breathe, took a deep breath myself—and two things came to mind—put a cork in it! Or screw it!

Achieving closure is important. When it comes to wine, few topics are as divisive as the closure: cork or twist-off? Understanding the difference can deepen your appreciation of what's in the bottle and ultimately, your glass.

When selecting a bottle of wine, many consumers still equate a cork with tradition, quality, and ceremony, but metal twist-off caps, often associated with convenience and modernity, have gained traction. Both closure types have advantages and downsides, but understanding their origins and roles can help demystify their impact on your wine experience.

Cork has been the traditional closure for wine bottles for centuries. Its use dates to ancient Greece and Rome, but it wasn't until the 17th century, when glass bottles became standardized, that cork became the go-to seal for wine. The material is harvested from the bark of the cork oak tree (*Quercus suber*), primarily found in Portugal, which supplies over half of the world's cork. Spain and parts of North Africa also grow cork oaks. Cork's popularity stems from its natural elasticity and impermeability. It forms a tight seal while allowing a tiny bit of oxygen to interact with the wine, enhancing the aging and flavor development of certain wines, particularly reds, by softening the tannins and enhancing the complex flavors over time. That's why cork is still favored for age-worthy wines.

Cork is harvested by carefully stripping the outer bark without damaging the tree. The bark is stripped every nine to 12 years. After harvest, the bark is aged, boiled, and processed into the stoppers we see in wine bottles. Cork oaks can live



for over 200 years, making cork a highly sustainable and renewable resource.

In contrast, metal screw caps, often made from aluminum, are a relatively recent innovation popularized in the mid-20th century. While twist-offs were originally met with skepticism by traditionalists, they've since gained wide acceptance, especially among modern wine producers who prioritize consistency, freshness, and practicality.

Twist-off caps create an airtight seal, preventing oxygen from entering the bottle. This is ideal for wines meant to be consumed young, such as many whites and light-bodied reds. They're also user-friendly—no corkscrew required! Airtight twist-off caps have virtually eliminated the risk of cork taint, a flaw caused by the compound TCA (2,4,6-trichloroanisole) that can ruin a wine's aroma and flavor. The convenience of twist-off caps makes them an ideal choice for white wines and wines intended for early consumption. They're easier to open and resealable, which is great for casual drinkers or in picnic settings.

In the final analysis, which is better? It really depends on the wine, the occasion, and personal preference. Cork remains the hallmark of tradition and elegance, while twist-offs bring practicality and reliability. If you're opening a bottle for casual enjoyment or immediate drinking, twist-offs offer ease and reliability. But if you're cellaring a fine vintage or savoring the ritual of uncorking, cork brings history, craftsmanship, and a romantic, sensory experience that's hard to beat.

In the end, both closures serve the same purpose—to protect the wine. Many premium wineries use both methods, depending on the intended style and aging potential.

In short, we are at a tipping point, so don't judge a bottle by its closure—let the wine inside speak for itself. Whether you twist or pull, what matters most is what's in the glass.

Cheers!

Cathy A. Rodgers
cathyrogers55@gmail.com

Editor's note: Contact Cathy with suggestions for future wine-themed articles.

Finding control in a chaotic world

BY HAYRIYA HEIDI HANSEN

As I write this article, winter's tentacles reach through spring, chilling my bones—but there are glimpses of summer. Weather, like life, is unpredictable. This brings me into this moment and thoughts about "control." Who is in control? What do we control? Where is the control? When do we have control?

Webster's Dictionary defines control as "the power to influence or direct people's behavior or the course of events." As I write, on today's date, April 9, world stock markets have plunged, worldwide tariff wars have begun, and Israel's airstrikes continue. World and USA news has created fear, grief, stress, and upheaval. Controlling any of these events feels outside our personal scope of influence. So, what can we control? Our lives, our death?

A wise teacher of mine once told me there are "areas of influence" and "areas of concern." Within our area of concern, individually, we have unapparent impact. We can't stop a war, a tariff, or the stock market. About all we can do is pray and hope for a good outcome. But we can have an impact within our areas of influence and maybe bring about some change. We might even believe we have some control. We can speak with family, friends, and work colleagues about issues important to us. We can share ideas and work together to effect change. We can volunteer, speak out, ignite those around us by sparking a light. We can have some influence, whether for good or bad.

So, what does all this have to do with the Southern Oregon Living and Dying Alliance? SOLADA's mission, in part, is to "increase our capacity to serve and care for one another and our planet." Stress, fear, grief, anxiety, sadness, or any negative emotion can decrease that capacity, significantly impacting our daily life and well-being, possibly leading to dysregulation, even maladies.

As individuals, we have no control over most changes. Our environment, country, and world are changing, and, inside ourselves, our bodies are aging. How do we manage? How can we regulate ourselves? We can walk, meditate, spend time with friends, play games, create art, dance, read, rest, eat well, drink water (optimally, equal to half your body

weight in ounces)! Most important, we can learn to titrate the news. Every day is different! As individuals, we have no control over the great change happening on our planet. We just have to "go with it."

Humbly, I'd assert that all we can affect is within our area of influence, which begins within our own selves—within our bodies, thoughts, words, and actions. I believe that this is the greatest power we have as individuals—to know ourselves and find ways forward, carrying a light not only for ourselves, but to shine upon others. This said, it's important to allow feelings to arise, to track, feel, and share them appropriately, while not allowing ourselves to circle the drain or be swallowed up. There truly is power in positive thinking, which has been linked to numerous health benefits including a stronger immune system, reduced stress and anxiety, improved mental well-being, and even a longer lifespan.

Some believe these are the darkest days on earth. Perhaps. But from time immemorial there have been challenges and extreme difficulties plaguing humans. Please know I am not minimizing the trials many people are enduring right now, and I'm not suggesting that a simple flip of a "positive" switch will make these troubles go away.

What I am presenting is a shift in consciousness for your personal betterment and for those around you. I'm suggesting a change in the way you look at life—choosing how you'll live in this moment, knowing that the next moment is not a guarantee, knowing one day, perhaps soon, you and I will die and everyone we know and love will die. Ultimately, all you or I really do have control over is our own thoughts, words, and deeds.

As the saying goes, "None of us gets out of here alive." Einstein said it best, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

Now go have your best day ever.

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■ **RECREATE**
Continued from page 5

settings. Days before the sold-out concert, the organization received an email from a ticket holder seeking assurance that her disabled companions would be able to reach the concert site—one used a cane and the other a walker.

A scouting trip revealed only two handicap parking spots and a crumbling ADA path full of potholes that didn't reach the lake's steep edge.

This woman gave her tickets to able-bodied friends and made a fair point: "It may be too late for this event, but I would suggest that ADA accessibility, or the lack thereof, be addressed in any future (especially ticketed) outdoor events."

The Recreation Ready grant process required A Greater Applegate to show support from the community

and to assemble a steering committee. Enthusiasm was easy to come by. Letters of support and willingness to join the project's steering committee came in from Travel Southern Oregon, Travel Medford, Hart-Tish Park, In a Landscape, the Jacksonville Chamber, Applegate Partnership, the Outdoor Working Group, Provolt Recreation Area, and several Forest Service employees.

Although A Greater Applegate did not receive the Recreation Ready grant, we were encouraged that the proposal reached the final stages of the review process. Travel Oregon recommended that we continue the effort and suggested alternative routes for funding the project.

For more information about A Greater Applegate, visit www.agreaterapplegate.org.
Christina Ammon
christina@footlooseintheapplegate.com

For Opinion piece and Letter to the Editor requirements, please visit applegater.org/submitting/#articles.

•••BIZBITS•••

Dormouse Farm. Dormouse Farm, owned by the mother-daughter team Cindy and Morgan Krepsky, has brought their bakery to Jacksonville. Located at 55 North 5th Street, the shop (or “shoppe,” as they like to call it) is open Thursday through Sunday, 10 am-6 pm, and features products from their own farm and from three Applegate farmers and two other local businesses. Their art gallery features several Jacksonville artists. This spring, Cindy and Morgan also opened the Dormouse Garden Shoppe, at the 5th Street location, offering starts from the farm’s 74 tomato varieties and many varieties of flowers, vegetables, and herbs. 541.702.2020 • DormouseFarm.com.

•••

English Lavender Farm. Paula Rice, who sells her hand-dyed, block-print scarves at the open-air markets in Medford and Ashland, will be offering classes in block printing at the English Lavender Farm, starting in June. Participants will learn to carve a lavender design into a block and then transfer it to a napkin or dish towel. The first class will be on June 30. Sue and Derek Owen, owners of the English Lavender Farm, will provide lavender lemonade and all the materials. For more details, contact Sue. The farm will open for visitors on June 13 and will be open through July, Friday-Monday, 10 am-4 pm. Stop by during the Lavender Festival, June 20-22 and July 11-13! 8040 Thompson Creek Road • 541-846-0375 • sue@englishlavenderfarm.com.

•••

The Lindsay Lodge. Anna Eastman, co-owner of the Lindsay Lodge, is happy to announce that the Myrtle and Goldmining rooms finally have showers. The Applegate Evening Market, at the Lindsay, started on May 14 and will be open every Wednesday, from 5-8 pm, throughout the summer. The restaurant opened for summer hours in May. Dinner is served Thursday through Sunday, 4-9 pm. Come and enjoy a cocktail, a glass of wine, or dinner on the deck of the lodge, in the bucolic atmosphere of the Applegate River flowing under the green bridge. 15100 Highway 328 • 541-846-6690 • anna@thelindsaylodge.com.

•••

Mama Bees Flower Farm. Lots of new things are happening at Mama Bees Flower Farm! Starting in July, the flower fields will be open for U-pick—come stroll through rows of vibrant blooms and make your own bouquet. Mama Bees is now included in the Rogue Valley Farm Tour on July 20. Swing by to see behind the scenes of farm life and enjoy some goodies. The farm store is opening soon (date TBA) and will be filled with fresh flowers, unique gifts, farm eggs, locally made goods, and more. A new driveway will take guests right down to the field and farm store (hopefully finished by press time!). 10561 North Applegate Road • 541-248-8533 • Brittini Doyle, IG @Mamabeesflowerfarm.

•••

Provolt Store. The Provolt Store is celebrating 150 years! Established in 1875, the Provolt Store has served our community for all those years. Officially called the Provolt Country Store and Deli, they serve amazing, made-from-scratch soups, sandwiches, pastries, and pizzas, and have, by all accounts, the best carrot cake in the west. They also serve authentic Korean barbecues in the summer. If you haven’t been there—or if it’s been years since your last visit—come by, experience a bit of living history, and make the Provolt Store a regular stop when you’re in the Applegate. Open daily, 7 am-8 pm. Corner of Williams Highway and Highway 238 • 541-846-6286.

Diana Coogle • diana@applegater.org

BizBits highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone. Email gater@applegater.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome letters to the editor but ask that all submissions be signed and include contact information for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be published.

We’d also like to thank the kind individual who sent an anonymous letter along with a generous donation. While we can’t publish the letter, your support is appreciated.

Annika Hodges, Editor in Chief, *Applegater* Newsmagazine

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Part-time Layout Editor *Applegater Newsmagazine*

Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., an established nonprofit organization in Applegate Valley, Oregon, seeks a layout editor for the *Applegater*, a 24-page quarterly newsmagazine that is printed and mailed to all residents of the Applegate Valley. Must have design abilities, be proficient in Adobe InDesign and Photoshop, and be able to meet hard deadlines. Excellent grammar and editing capabilities desired. Prior experience in newspaper/magazine layout for print preferred. Paid by the job as an independent contractor.

For more information about our organization and to view *Applegater* issues, visit applegater.org.
Send resume to diana@applegater.org.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Strengthening the *Applegater* team

BY DIANA COOGLE

On behalf of the *Applegater*’s Board of Directors, I am thrilled to welcome our new board members—Ash Martell, Heather Paladini, and Chris Loeffler. (See page 3 for details.) Thanks so much to these three people for saying, “I’d like to serve the Applegate community by helping keep the *Applegater* a vibrant vehicle of communication among us.” It warms my heart to know that Applegaters step forward in this way. What a boost of energy and enthusiasm!

I am constantly amazed by how people in the Applegate volunteer to help wherever help is needed—not only for the *Applegater*, but for many nonprofits throughout the valley. At the *Applegater*, they serve as writers, photographers, copy editors, proofreaders, and distributors. Every couple of years, the board likes to give all those volunteers a party, to express our appreciation. The board is planning that party now, so if you’re one of those volunteers, you’ll be receiving an invitation. We do appreciate you!

Another way to volunteer for the *Applegater* is to serve on the editorial committee. This group is responsible for reading the submitted articles to make sure they adhere to our policies and are appropriate for our readers. If you would like to serve on the editorial committee, let me know.

We always appreciate letters and comments. If you have a comment about any of the articles, a suggestion for a story, a recommendation for “They Live Among Us,” or a desire to serve on a committee, let me know. Jobs that you could do without having to be on the board include insurance coordinator, donations manager, storage manager, and others. Or if you have, you know, a contribution, a thank-you, an appreciation, a nudge—I’d love to hear from you!

Diana Coogle • diana@applegater.org
Chair, *Applegater* Board of Directors



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Empowering rural entrepreneurs

BY KENNY HOUCK

The Applegate region is unique in southern Oregon, as rural communities like Murphy, Provolt, Williams, Ruch, and Applegate straddle the Josephine and Jackson County lines. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) recognizes the challenges these communities face for access to small-business services.

The SBDC, with two main offices in Grants Pass and Medford, strives to respond to small-business needs and meet people where they are. The Rogue Community College (RCC) SBDC has a dedicated advisor specifically for rural businesses outside the main city areas, so that clients can work with the office that is most convenient for them. Working with A Greater Applegate and their community development efforts, we want to expand the message that SBDC services are relevant and responsive for our rural businesses, whether they are just starting out or looking to grow.

Small Business Development Center Services

All of Oregon's SBDCs offer no-cost, confidential advising and low-cost classes designed to support your ideas and assist you in growing your business to the next level. As the key regional provider of entrepreneurial and business development services, the RCC SBDC plays a vital role in southern Oregon's economic development by assisting entrepreneurs in every stage of the business life cycle. Since 1984, RCC SBDC has assisted thousands of emerging and growing businesses by providing the professional expertise, tools, and information necessary to make sound

business decisions in a complex and ever-changing marketplace.

In addition to our core offerings of business advising provided at no cost, training, and business research, we also offer a comprehensive toolkit of specialized services for all types of businesses. Our knowledgeable business advisors are experienced in a variety of business topics and understand how to do business in Oregon. We can support you with valuable, relevant advice and connect you with a variety of useful resources.

Please call 541-956-7494 or email us at SBDC@rogucecc.edu for more information on how we can assist you with your business success. You can also register for advising online, and we will contact you to schedule an appointment. Our confidential, no-cost business advising services are about empowering you to innovate and succeed.

At the RCC SBDC, you will be engaged with your very own business advisor who can be a key resource in helping you achieve your business goals. Whether it is finance, marketing, operations, management, or just about any business topic you may need help with, our advisors are here to guide you every step of the way. Our team has the knowledge, tools, and access to the most up-to-date resources to help newly emerging and growing businesses.

To find help at the SBDC nearest you, visit oregonsbdc.org.

Kenny Houck
Rural Business Advisor
RCC Small Business
Development Center
KHouck@rogucecc.edu

Investing in community, one purchase at a time

BY JAIMY WILKINSON

When my partner and I chose to move to this beautiful rural community, it wasn't just the sweeping landscapes that drew us in. It was the opportunity to live closer to the source—to know the people who grow our vegetables, build our furniture, and bake our bread. In a world dominated by anonymous global commerce, there's something deeply grounding about living in a place where your purchases directly support the people around you.

Like many newcomers, we quickly discovered that buying locally made goods isn't just a shopping choice—it's a way of investing in the very qualities that make this place special.

When you buy a handmade item from the artisan down the road or a bunch of carrots from a nearby farm, your money doesn't just disappear into a corporate system—it stays here. Studies show that for every dollar spent at a local business, about 67 cents remains in the community. In contrast, only about 43 cents from chain store purchases does the same. This "local multiplier effect" ripples outward, because local businesses tend to hire local accountants, use local printing shops, and source materials from other nearby businesses. The result? A stronger, more interconnected local economy.

In a small, rural region like ours, economic resilience depends on maintaining a diverse range of jobs. Local producers—whether they're making hot sauce, restoring furniture, or building homes—offer employment opportunities that might not exist otherwise. These businesses often keep traditional skills alive, too, from cheese-making to woodworking, quilting to basketry. With each handcrafted item comes a story, a lineage of knowledge passed down through generations.

Buying local also has environmental benefits. Locally made products typically travel far fewer miles to reach us, reducing transportation emissions and our overall carbon footprint. Local farms often prioritize sustainable practices, and many local artisans consciously choose eco-friendly materials and methods.

Supporting our local economy doesn't mean swearing off every non-local purchase. It simply means being intentional when you can. This year, consider buying a piece of local art at one of the many events throughout the valley. Every painting, ceramic bowl,

or handmade candle tells a story—and reminds us of the creative talent that lives among us.

Here are a few ways to discover and support local businesses:

Visit one of our weekly farmers' markets—where you'll find everything from honey and beef to sourdough and fresh flowers.

Explore seasonal craft fairs for handmade goods and unique gifts like pottery, herbal remedies, or natural-fiber clothing.

Check out local art shows and gallery events hosted at libraries, wineries, and community centers—where regional artists display and sell their work.

Take advantage of farm tours and open studios to meet the people behind the products.

Browse A Greater Applegate's Business Network Directory (agreaterapplegate.org/business-network/), a great resource for finding local service providers and artisans.

Join a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program for a weekly share of fresh, local produce.

Check out the *Rogue Valley Flavor Guide*, which highlights regional food and farm businesses across the Rogue Valley.

Supporting local businesses goes beyond the transaction—it creates relationships and builds a shared sense of place. When you know who made your dining table or harvested your salad greens, you develop a deeper appreciation for both the item and the person behind it.

As our community faces ongoing economic challenges, every choice matters. When you opt for locally made products, you're expressing what you value—skilled craftsmanship, meaningful connection, and a vibrant, self-reliant local economy. You're also helping to preserve the traditions, trades, and flavors that make our region unique.

The next time you need a gift, a meal, or a household item, pause and consider: is there a local option? Choosing local isn't just about the item itself—it's about sustaining the kind of community we want to live in.

Let's keep that spirit alive. For ourselves. For our neighbors. And for future generations who will inherit this beautiful place we all call home.

Jaimy Wilkinson
AV Food & Farm Network Coordinator
Applegate Evening Market Manager
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The Upper Applegate Fire Area is in bloom

BY SUZIE SAVOIE

Native plants respond to wildfire in many different ways, and the vegetative response from last summer’s Upper Applegate Fire has been interesting to observe. Like many botanists and naturalists who flock to post-fire environments for the often-spectacular wildflower blooms, I enjoy watching the natural recovery after wildfires. I have hiked off-trail throughout the burn areas of every wildfire that has burned in the Applegate in the past 24 years and have learned about the way different native-plant communities respond to wildfires, depending on elevation, soils, aspect, and many other conditions. Post-fire environments are among the most fascinating, abundant, and botanically rich habitats for people who study native flora.

Wildfires are not all the same. The slow-moving, beneficial 2017 Abney Fire burned up to my property in the Upper Applegate. This fire provided fuel reduction, habitat enhancement, and post-fire super blooms like you wouldn’t believe. However, I have also watched my mother-in-law deal with the trauma of losing her home in the 2020 Almeda Fire in Talent. Last June’s Upper Applegate Fire was a little too close for comfort for many local landowners in the Applegate. Thankfully, it didn’t do too much damage to human infrastructure, but like all wildfires in the Applegate, it has had positive influences on the natural ecosystem—after all, we live in a fire-dependent and fire-adapted landscape. The Siskiyou Mountains have

long evolved with wildfire, and sediment-core studies done at Acorn Woman Lake show that wildfires have been a regular occurrence in the Applegate for thousands of years. Native plants have evolved to take advantage of them!

Although many people describe the aftermath of wildfires as having “destroyed” the landscape, that is typically not the case in natural ecosystems. The post-fire environment is rich in wildlife and botanical biodiversity and is usually a boon for pollinators. In fact, firefighting bulldozers usually do more ecological damage in natural ecosystems than the wildfires themselves.

The Upper Applegate Fire area has had such a beautiful wildflower response this year that many locals have been out hiking the area to check out the gorgeous blooms. Species blooming this year include grass widow, spring gold, Tolmie’s cat’s ears, blue dicks, western buttercups, Pacific hound’s tongue, woodland star, western trillium, Shelton’s violet, Douglas’ monkeyflower, lomatiums, popcorn flower, Henderson’s fawn lily, California poppies, seablush, blue gilia, meadow larkspur, and many more, including the endangered Gentner’s fritillary and its relatives scarlet fritillary and checker lily. All these species have responded positively to the wildfire. In fact, many are growing much larger, in more abundance, and with more blooms this year, precisely because of the fire, the deposition of nutrient-rich ash that acts like fertilizer, and increased sunlight and changes in soil pH.

Many wildflowers, trees, and shrubs growing in the Upper Applegate Fire footprint are simply growing from an existing root system that survived the fire unscathed. Trees can be underburned and survive, or if they are a stump-sprouting species and were top-killed in the fire, they can sprout from their root systems, a phenomenon called epicormic sprouting. Madrone, Oregon white oak, black oak, live oak, and other hardwood trees are putting on abundant growth. Many even started to sprout within a few weeks after the fire was out. Some are also responding with seed germination—under many madrone trees in the Upper Applegate Fire area, thousands of tiny madrone seedlings are emerging under the shade of fire-scarred snags. This two-pronged strategy for renewal—seed germination and epicormic sprouting—aids survival. Many stump-sprouting shrubs are also growing quickly, including silk tassel, deer brush, mock orange, serviceberry, and mountain mahogany.

Most of the wildflowers that are blooming this year in the fire footprint are also growing from existing root systems that made it through the fire: bulbs, corms, rhizomes, tubers, and fibrous root systems. The annual species that are in bloom, including popcorn flower, seablush, blue gilia, and others are growing from seeds that germinated this spring, right out of the ash and burned soil.

Native seed germination can be triggered from the flames of a wildfire itself. Species like manzanita have thick seed coats that need to be scarified to trigger germination; the serotinous cones of knobcone pine open from the heat of fire. But in the post-fire environment, changes in soil chemistry, a different pH, increased sunlight, and more subtle changes trigger massive seed germination and super blooms. With increased native



Scarlet fritillary (*Fritillaria recurva*) blooming in the footprint of the Upper Applegate Fire in April 2025. Photo: Suzie Savoie.



Bluedicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) blooming in abundance in the footprint of the Upper Applegate Fire in April 2025. Photo: Luke Ruediger.

seed germination come more biodiversity and more beautiful wildflower blooms in the Applegate!

Suzie Savoie
klamathsiskiyou@gmail.com

Conversations with the land When the trees keep talking

BY GAY BRADSHAW

There was a summer ritual in my family as I grew up.

Preparation began when north-facing snow on the bumpy dirt road leading to the peaks cleared. Wax-papered sandwiches, apple juice, oranges, peanut butter saltines, and pickles were tucked into the wooden basket pushed up against a square box in the station wagon. The box wasn’t for us. Its homemade cookies, wine, peaches, cheese, and the Sunday paper were destined for others. Elsewhere, jackets, sneakers, a first-aid kit, binoculars, canteens, a canvas bucket, a shovel, and a USGS map were secured. Last, but not least, were Parrot and Beagle. One last check that nothing and no one had been forgotten, car doors slammed shut—one, two, three, four—and we were off.

As unending sea-green forests swept by, the wind pushed back my bangs and filled my lungs with the breath of cottonwood and Douglas fir. Then, suddenly, the vista transformed. We were catapulted into the dazzling green of the subalpine world strewn with orange, magenta,

and yellow wildflowers. In low gear, we crawled up a nail-bitingly steep and narrow trail. My brother and I unconsciously leaned forward as if to help the car’s struggling progress. Finally, we made it. We had arrived.

We sat awestruck by the mountains’ peace. Then a banging screen door and cries of welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Von Stein, veteran viewers of Dutchman Peak, broke our reverie. They wrapped us in a huddle of hugs. After a few minutes of chattering friendship, the box was handed over.

One particular day of this yearly ritual stands out. That day, I had an experience that would shape my entire understanding of life and the wondrous beings with whom we live.

On that first picnic of the summer, my parents, brother, and I set out for our favorite spot, a little roadside space overlooking the meadows below. While we unpacked, my mother spread a tablecloth on the grass and laid out lunch. That day, though, we weren’t alone. An unexpected guest arrived.



Lupine growing wild in the Applegate Valley. Photo: Gay Bradshaw.

Carrying a small rucksack and hiking staff, his long gray hair tucked behind his ears, the stranger nodded a warm greeting. My parents waved him over, handing him a sandwich and a bottle of beer. My brother stood near, lunch in one hand, binoculars in the other. I sat by the stranger, watching a pair of Golden Eagles soar in casual circles, almost at eye level.

While looking for ant lions and arrowheads, I felt the stranger’s hand touch my shoulder as he whispered, “Look over there.” I followed his gaze, and there, in the shadow of a nearby grove, were a mother black bear and two young. The man and I exchanged grins. The bear looked up, raised her nose in greeting, then settled down in the long summer grass with her frolicking cubs.

“They know you, don’t they,” I said. The man replied, “Yes, we’ve become good friends, but it takes a lot of listening and understanding.” Sensing my puzzlement, he explained, “Belonging somewhere isn’t just up to you. The animals and the land have to feel you belong. You can live in a place, but you don’t belong until the land says so.”

We watched the bears sleep and the eagles glide. After a few minutes, I turned and asked, “Do you think I belong?” The man answered with a question, “First, what do you hear when you walk in the forest?” “Nothing,” I said, “just my breath and the wind.” He shook his head, “No, I don’t mean the wind. There’s something else. When the land feels you belong, the trees will keep talking—and you’ll be able to hear what the trees are saying.”

As morning turned to afternoon, the stranger rose to leave, saying his goodbyes as he went down the hill and disappeared into the grove where the bears had played.

I’ve thought a lot about what he told me. It’s taken time, a lot of listening, and a lot of care—just like he said. I listened and waited, and now, when I wander in the mountains where he walked, the trees keep talking.

Gay Bradshaw • bradshaw@kerulos.org

TRANSFORMATIVE POWERS

Continued from page 16

- They are helping to keep the air conditioner running and the lights on, so that our entire community can join together in learning, celebrating, and creating.
- They are celebrating joy and sharing memories through parties, baptisms,

- weddings, and memorial services held at JCC.
- They are finding friends and building networks of support.
- They are sharing their special skills with others.
- They are taking steps to enjoy and extend their lives in healthy and creative ways.

- They are learning, thinking, pondering, and sharing ideas.
- JCC offers each of our community members a place to find themselves, to find others, and to build a more satisfying life. We encourage you and all our neighbors to drop by and see the possibilities for yourself in answering life’s big questions through service, philanthropy, volunteerism,

participation, and celebration at JCC. If you need ideas, check out our website for summer classes and events, or find information on donating and volunteering at jacksonvillecommunitycenter.org. We happily take calls as well at 541-702-2585. Julie Rae field, JCC Executive Director jraefield@jacksonvillecommunitycenter.org

Applegate Outdoor School abounds at Cantrall Buckley Park

BY CHARLOTTE HYDE

The spring 2025 season of Applegate Outdoor School (AOS) drew to a close at the beginning of May. Throughout the month of April, AOS served approximately 350 sixth-grade students from the Medford School District's Hedrick Middle School in weeklong sessions of outdoor, inquiry-based learning at Cantrall Buckley Park. Now in its third year, the AOS program has honed in on its most successful attributes while continuing to explore new ideas, resulting in ever more exciting and impactful experiences for the students we serve.

The foundation of the AOS experience is the curriculum. Composed of field studies on water quality, aquatic macroinvertebrates, forestry, soil science, and fire ecology, the curriculum engages students in hands-on, place-based learning experiences that cater to a variety of interests and learning styles. Activities include chemical testing of Applegate River water samples, collecting aquatic insects, using forestry tools to "map" tree data, building soil sculptures, and creating landscapes out of playdoh and matches to model fire behavior. Each member of our excellent team of spring 2025 instructors, who represent a range of careers, brought a unique flair to their lesson delivery, emphasizing the value of diversity in the field of environmental education.

While the field studies that comprise the core of the AOS curriculum were carried over from previous years, our 2025 season introduced exciting changes

to the first and final day of each session. The new approach to day one focused on building rapport among the six groups of instructors, while grounding them in the environment of Cantrall Buckley Park, through a flexible blend of team-building activities, nature-journaling prompts, and a scavenger hunt highlighting the park's unique features. This mellow opening sought to gently ease students into what can be an intimidating experience for many while providing them with a thorough orientation of their classroom for the next week.

The challenge of designing an accessible yet exciting kickoff to a day-only outdoor school program is exceeded only by that of designing a satisfying conclusion. AOS met this challenge by concluding each session with an afternoon of "choose your own adventure," in which students were able to participate in one or more of a range of activities, including a nature walk, board games, arts and crafts, fairy garden building, field games, and, causing much excitement, archery. Introducing an element of free choice increases students' sense of autonomy, thus increasing their sense of ownership over their outdoor school experience.

A notable addition to AOS programming this year has been the development of a high school leadership (HSL) program, piloted by Cheyenne Palmo, Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council's United Community Action Network AmeriCorps Environmental

Education Specialist. This year, ten students from North Medford High School and one homeschool student accompanied an AOS instructor throughout a week of programming. The aim of the HSL program is to provide high schoolers with an opportunity to mentor younger students in their community, thereby building leadership skills, gaining experience working with children, and growing deeper roots within their community. Likewise, sixth graders benefit from the presence of HSLs by connecting with a positive role model. High school leaders are also valuable assets for field instructors. Each HSL was trained to lead specific activities, including a team-building game and a complex water-quality test, as well as to support instructor and student needs throughout the week. Our amazing first batch of high school leaders has left us excited to build upon this program in the future.

As a state-funded outdoor school provider, AOS is participating in an Outdoor School Evaluation Project through the Oregon State University Extension Outdoor School program. This project seeks to elucidate the various impacts of outdoor school on students, ranging from learning outcomes, socio-emotional development, environmental stewardship, and career interests. In addition to contributing to a state-wide dataset, data from AOS participants will also be shared with program staff.



Hedrick sixth graders line up to study forestry.



A high school leader discusses aquatic macroinvertebrates.

This valuable feedback will allow us to continue to adjust our program to improve the student experience. Just as we ask our students to learn and grow, AOS is a growth-oriented program that will continue to evolve in years to come.

For more information, visit our website at www.applegatepartnership.org/outdoorschool.

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An update from Rogue Forest Partners

BY TOM GRECO

Rogue Forest Partners is a collaboration between six agencies and four nonprofit organizations to plan and implement strategic forest-health and fuels-reduction projects around the Rogue Basin. Projects use ecologically based thinning and prescribed fire to protect forest values and communities across federal, municipal, and private lands. Partners raise funds for this work from multiple federal, state, and private philanthropic sources and work with tribes, fire districts, landowners, and other community-based organizations to inform our efforts. Here is an update on recent accomplishments and what community members can expect over the coming months, in the Applegate Valley and beyond.

The Upper Applegate Watershed (UAW) Restoration Project spans 52,000 acres of land largely administered by the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This long-term, community-informed restoration effort aims to improve forest

health and enhance wildlife habitat, while reducing the risk of severe wildfire to the ecosystem. Since December, the lead implementation partner Lomakatsi Restoration Project has completed 141 acres of surface- and ladder-fuel thinning and nearly 500 acres of hand pile-burning within the UAW project. Working closely with the United States Forest Service, Lomakatsi also contracted Timberline Helicopters, Inc., to complete another 215 acres of helicopter-based ecological commercial thinning. To date, Rogue Forest Partners has completed 956 acres of surface and ladder treatments and an additional 878 acres of ecological commercial thinning, with 1.5 million board feet of small- to medium-diameter trees removed as the byproducts of restoration and sold to Murphy



A Lomakatsi crew member conducts ecological thinning on private property as part of the West Bear All-Lands Restoration Project.



Lomakatsi crews implement a controlled hand-pile burn on private land near Jacksonville as part of the West Bear All-Lands Restoration Project.

complete pre-treatment monitoring over the summer, with 275 acres of ecological thinning scheduled to begin in the fall.

Just over the ridge that separates the Applegate Valley from the Rogue Valley, the West Bear All-Lands Restoration Project spans 27,000 acres of the wildland-urban interface west of Bear Creek and the I-5 corridor, from Talent to Jacksonville. To date, Lomakatsi has overseen completion of 4,093 acres of ecological thinning, working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to engage 170 different private landowners across the project area, as well as with the City of Jacksonville and local partners for treatments within the Jacksonville Woodlands. Over the past several months, we've been focused on burning hand piles across 556 acres. Ecological thinning on an additional 1,057 acres is planned to resume this fall.

While we are getting essential work done in forests and neighborhoods, we are also creating opportunities for tribal and rural youth. These projects provide training opportunities through Lomakatsi's Inter-Tribal Conservation Corps and Youth Ecological Forestry Training Program, helping to build local workforce capacity and support pathways to natural resource careers.

Sign up for updates

Rogue Forest Partners provides occasional updates to the community about operations, especially when controlled burning is planned. To stay in the loop, text "RFPupdate" to 855-594-2793 or follow Rogue Forest Partners at rogueforestpartners.org or on Facebook (@rogueforestpartners).

Tom Greco
Communications Director
Lomakatsi Restoration Project
tom@lomakatsi.org



www.applegatepartnership.org/upcoming-events

**APPLEGATE
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www.facebook.com/applegatepartnership

"promoting ecological, economic and community well-being in the Applegate watershed through on-the-ground projects and strategic collaborations."

Veneer. The revenue helps to offset the cost of restoration work.

Partners are gearing up to continue work on the Williams Project, designed to reduce wildfire risk to nearby communities and enhance ecosystem health on private and BLM-administered land. To date, partners have completed 194 acres of ecological thinning across six parcels of private land, and an additional 80 acres on BLM land. Lomakatsi's technical forestry team, working closely with the BLM, will

NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS

Ruch Outdoor Community School hosts inspiring Art and Wellness Fair

BY SARA BERTOLERO AND KATIE WALKER

This year’s Art and Wellness Fair at Ruch Outdoor Community School was a vibrant celebration of creativity and self-expression, showcasing the incredible work of our K-5 and middle school artists. Families and students got to experience sound-bath healing, yoga, and engagement with a variety of valuable resources provided by our dedicated community partners.

The fair was an amazing experience, bringing together a mix of relaxation, movement, and community connection.

We are deeply grateful to WinterSpring, Options, Community Works, Swindells Resource Center, and Maslow for showing up and generously sharing their time, resources, and expertise, and offering families an art activity. We are also thankful for our Ruch students—Carlie, Riley Jo, Tyler, Harlow, James, Addis, Ari, and Christian—who helped organize and set up our Wellness Fair. Your support played a vital role in making our wellness fair an impactful event for everyone involved.

Since January, students in our after-school art club and middle school art elective had been pouring their hearts into preparing for this event, exploring a variety of artistic mediums, including fiber arts, painting, drawing, clay sculpture, and found-object art. As the months progressed, we witnessed their art skills grow, along with their confidence in expressing emotions, ideas, and personal passions through art. From intricate maps of their imaginations and recycled cardboard weavings to color palettes inspired by nature walks and plein-air paintings of the stunning landscapes surrounding our school, these young artists pushed the boundaries of their creativity.

We were proud to share their masterpieces with families and community members. The fair was an inspiring reflection of the exploration, dedication, creativity, and growth that define our school community. Ruch Outdoor Community School reintroduced art into its curriculum this year through a partnership with Sticks and Stones Studio, a local nonprofit dedicated to enriching children’s lives through creative expression.

Art fosters cognitive growth, emotional expression, and resilience, encouraging



Sound bath immersion with Kelly Peters and Sara Champion. Photo: Jody Hubler.



K-5 students display their art projects in the school courtyard. Photo: Jody Hubler.

innovation and critical thinking in students. Together, we’re working to make art a lasting part of our school and community. To support this effort, please visit gofundme.com/f/help-us-bring-free-nature-art-camps-to-rural-kids.

For more information about our art programs and student wellness offerings, please contact the school at 541-842-3850.

Sara Bertolero and Katie Walker
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Student art projects on display for classmates and families. Photo: Jody Hubler.

Hands-on learning at Applegate School

BY RENEE GOURLEY

Students at Applegate School are enjoying learning through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) and agriculture. An incredible amount of learning happens through hands-on experiences and projects that introduce and develop lifelong skills through various activities.

The kindergarten and first-grade students have been studying baby animals this spring. They learned the names for both the adults and babies for a variety of animal species. They studied the life cycle of a chicken, how a chick develops from an egg, and how to properly raise chickens. For a more hands-on learning experience, the students have been incubating fertilized eggs that their teacher, Mrs. Hirschmugl, brought in from her own chickens. All spring they anxiously waited for the new chicks to emerge from their shells. Some of the students will be lucky enough to take baby chicks home!

Kindergarten through third-grade students were privileged to have a visit from Smokey Bear, who, along with folks from the ranger station and local fire department, taught the students about fire safety. At the end of the presentation, students were rewarded with hugs, high fives, and a class picture with Smokey.

Many of the grades continue to enjoy the Garden Club with White Oak Farm. Through the club, the students have learned the scientific names for wildflowers and how to identify a variety of local trees. They take nature walks, and they get to interact with and hold baby goats and chicks. Ms. Rucker, teacher in the second- and third-grade classroom, led her students in an experiment on how flowers bloom. They made paper flowers that would open when placed in water, giving a visual demonstration of how flowers bloom. Another incredible facet to the Garden Club is that the students get to visit White Oak Farm and learn how food is grown and how it gets to our plates. Students are involved in harvesting food items around the farm and preparing their own lunch. The kindergarten and first-grade students

made shepherd’s pie and a cake on their most recent visit to the farm!

The middle school students who took a gardening elective this spring have been using the school’s greenhouse to grow plant starts. The students, led by Ms. Gourley, have learned how to properly prepare seeds and sow them, as well as how to maintain the right conditions in the greenhouse and keep the plants watered. Students have been eagerly waiting and watching as the seeds sprout. They are excited to be able to sell their starts for two types of sunflowers, corn, green onions, jalapeno peppers, carrots, radishes, and cucumbers. This group has also been weeding a dirt bed on campus, where they will plant flowers.

Middle school students, with their teachers, Mr. Fall and Ms. Gourley, have been developing their STEM/CTE (Career/Technical Education) room over the past couple of years and have been working on some great projects. Students can create their own 3-D designs, print them, and use the laser cutter and engraver on wood projects. Recently, some students were fortunate to participate in two small units of learning from the National Inventors Hall of Fame through the Southern Oregon Education Service District. One group of students did a project called “Duck Chuck,” investigating how slope and angle changed how far a little rubber duckie could be flung. Another group worked on a project called “Marble Arcade” that looked at energy and how to get a marble to roll through a maze they created. Projects like these allow students to learn important skills and help develop their analytical thinking, all while having fun!

Much learning has happened this school year, and even though the year is quickly coming to an end, the students continue to eagerly learn!

Renee Gourley • 541-846-6280

Middle School Teacher, ELA,

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Applegate School

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Photos, left to right:
-Toree Wilkening, Dan Sathre, and Kurt Wilkening search for coupons in the Applegater while shopping in Cambodia.
-Jim Clover and Annette Parsons share hot Gater news with a new friend at Borrego Springs, California.
-Erik Weiser learns about Olympus from the Turkey travel section in the Applegater.

Keep those articles, letters, opinions, and "Reading the Gater" photos coming in. You are the Gater!



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