

Applegater

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Photo by Liz Butler

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Responsive firefighters honored at banquet

BY SUZANNE OLSON

Every morning we wake up fortunate to find ourselves living in the Applegate Valley. But have you ever wondered who might come to your aid in an emergency? You think you might be having a heart attack or there's a fire in the chimney. Your spouse has fallen down and can't get up. You call 911. Who responds? How long does it take them to get to you? You need help now!

There is help at hand. It comes from our neighbors, the dedicated professionals at our Applegate Valley Fire District (AVFD). And they will be there to help you within 6 to 17 minutes. This organization operates with a 95% volunteer workforce that provides 24-hour emergency medical response and wildland and structure fire protection to make the Applegate Valley

an even better place to live.

The fire district is composed of seven stations across 181 square miles west of Medford and southeast of Grants Pass, extending almost to the California-Oregon border. With the new recruits this year, there are 46 volunteer firefighters responding to our population of roughly 10,000 in the mountains and valleys. Fire Chief Brett Fillis says 2012 was a successful recruitment year, though the support and drive to recruit volunteers each year must never let up.

I stopped by headquarters in January to visit with Chief Fillis and district office manager Carey Chaput. I was curious about what was accomplished last year and what they were thinking about for the year ahead. It is an eye-opener to consider the

amount and type of monthly and annual alarms that district personnel responded to in 2012. Here are the numbers:

2012 ALARM STATISTICS

	December	Annual
Fire	9	143
Medical	35	337
Mutual Aid	10	102
Total	54	582

Wow—582 alarm responses in 2012. On average, that's more than one a day. Though as Carey is quick to add, some days there may be nine, some days none at all. Thanks to the tax levy that passed in 2000, the district now provides 24-hour emergency medical response coverage.

See FIREFIGHTERS, page 4



Fire Chief Brett Fillis presented awards to volunteers and employees of AVFD at the annual banquet hosted by Friends of the AVFD. See page 4 for the complete list of awards. Photo by Captain Mike Kuntz.

Local lepidoptera provide spectacular shows

BY LINDA KAPPEN

As nature's renewal begins, the hills and meadows around us are painted in shades of green and colorful wildflowers, and butterfly fauna surrounds us.

There are five families of butterflies that are categorized into many subfamilies. Oregon has 165 species of butterflies and 1,500 species of moths. In southwest Oregon alone there are 117 species of butterflies and 1,000 species of moths. Sound like a lot? It is! Because of the diverse region we live in, this area is known as a hot spot in lepidoptera (butterflies, moths and skippers). The five families of butterflies are:

- *Papilionidae*: Swallowtails, Parnassians
- *Pieridae*: Whites, Sulphurs, Marbles
- *Lycaenidae*: Coppers, Hairstreaks, Blues
- *Nymphalidae*: Brushfooted butterflies, e.g., Monarch (see photo above)



The Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is a milkweed butterfly, in the family Nymphalidae, and may be the best known of all North American butterflies. Photo by Linda Kappen.

• *Hesperiidae*: Skippers
Nymphalidae is the largest family of butterflies. At our lower elevations, there are many species to be enjoyed locally. But how do you tell them apart? It may be helpful to compare the photos accompanying this article (see above and page 12).

A butterfly's life starts as an egg, next as a larva or caterpillar, and then as a pupa or chrysalis. Finally, after a period of time,

See LEPIDOPTERA, page 12

Forestfarm Nursery donated to Pacifica

Forestfarm Nursery has been donated by founders Ray and Peg Prag to Pacifica Garden to provide a stable base of financial support. Established in 1998, Pacifica is a 420-acre nonprofit nature, arts and education center, and is home of the Caterpillar, a mobile science center that brings hands-on science education to 9,500 children and adults every year. Pacifica can be very broadly divided into two parts: a 250-acre planned Botanic Garden and the 200-acre Klamath-Siskiyou Nature Center. Many in the community have already been to Pacifica to attend a wedding, music festival, or arts event. All are also welcome to hike the trails, bird-watch, picnic and enjoy the land.

Forestfarm at Pacifica is a mail-order nursery with an enormous variety (over 5,000 kinds) of ornamental and useful plants from around the world. When you

purchase plants from Forestfarm, you help support Pacifica. If you would like to visit Forestfarm, please call 541-846-7269 to make an appointment as spring shipping is happening and it can get pretty hectic out there.

You are invited to these upcoming events:

- May 11 is an open house at Forestfarm at Pacifica. Come check out the new digs!
- June 29 - July 27: Esther King Price Nature-Art Sculpture Contest. The theme is "Birds." Sculptures will be on display for the month. Come out and vote—there will be a \$200 prize for People's Choice! (If you would like to submit a sculpture, call 541-846-9230.)

New events and classes are happening all the time. Keep up with Pacifica at www.pacificagarden.org.



WE WANT YOU!

The *Applegater* newspaper is seeking a few new members for its Board of Directors—folks with vision, creative fund-raising experience, and the ability to communicate and participate on a *working* board. The lack of remuneration is more than compensated for by the fun and satisfaction of helping to continue publication of this fixture of the Applegate Valley.

If interested, call Paula Rissler at 541-601-8949.

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