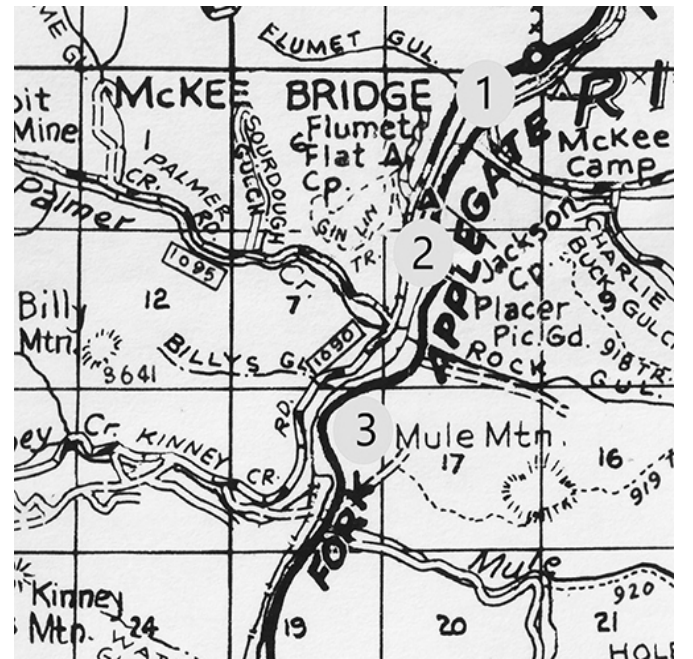


NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

Hop aboard the Steamboat Time Travel Trail

BY LAURA AHEARN

Join McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) on Saturday, June 11, for an adventure on the Steamboat Time Travel Trail! Participants should check in at McKee Bridge between 10:30-11 am. We'll have a brief ceremony to dedicate the new interpretive panel, which lays out the evolution of transportation in the Upper Applegate and the survival story of McKee Bridge, then start a self-directed tour of the historic nooks and crannies of Big Applegate, Carberry, Steamboat, and Thompson Creek.



The Time Travel Trail starts at McKee Bridge.

The course is 39 miles over well-maintained county roads. A couple of miles in the middle are unpaved. You'll go at your own pace, linger at historic spots as long as you like, perhaps have a picnic or take a short hike. You'll collect an envelope at five stops, and the only time constraint is that you must arrive at the 1914 Ruch schoolhouse by 2:30 pm to open your envelopes and play the hand of cards you've collected. Winning hands receive



Steamboat in 1903, one of seven one-room log schoolhouses on the Steamboat Time Travel Trail. Photo: SOHS 2385.

some great prizes like top-quality Cowhorn biodynamic wine, Applegate Country Club pizza, Sweets 'n Eats delights, or an appliqued pillow depicting McKee Bridge handcrafted by MBHS founder Evelyn Byrne Williams.

The course will take you past the former locations of seven one-room schoolhouses dating back to the 1870s. You'll visit Kanaka Gulch where Agnes Baker Pilgrim—Grandma Aggie, Taowhywee, Morning Star—revived the sacred Salmon Ceremony in 1994. You'll envision Big Applegate (aka Watkins), the vibrant community founded by Native American matriarchs and their grizzled, white, gold-mining husbands in the valley now inundated by Applegate Dam. You'll drive through a battleground—that story illustrates how hearsay and creative recollections have left us with some questionable, albeit entertaining, "history."

There will be gold, copper, and cinnabar mining sites at every turn, often reflected in massive piles of tailings and place names like Flumet Gulch and Sturgis Fork. Fire lookouts, sawmills, post offices, and dance halls once dotted the route.

Those structures are now gone, but their stories endure. You'll learn about early homesteaders who left their mark on the map as well.

Reservations are not required, but we would appreciate a brief message to mckeebridge1917@gmail.com if you plan to participate, noting the number in your party so we have an idea of how many hands of cards to deal. Don't forget to bring cash or a checkbook to pick up some great MBHS swag (the signal at the bridge is too marginal to process card payments). You can round out a perfect Applegate day by attending the Ruch Outdoor Community School dinner and auction at Valley View Winery. Call the school at 541-842-3850 for details.

Another chance to see Britt's photos of Applegaters

Did you catch the exhibit about Applegate clientele of Peter Britt at the Jacksonville Library? If not, you can see an expanded version now through July at Southern Oregon Historical Society, 106 N. Central Avenue, Medford (the former J.C. Penney's building).

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Sixth-grade students from Wilson Elementary gather to learn about macroinvertebrate collection and identification along the Applegate River. Photo: Eva King.

Getting outside with APWC

BY EVA KING

The Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC) has been working hard to get kids outside. Through partnerships and community collaboration, APWC offered a variety of environmental education endeavors over the last year and plans to expand their educational offerings for next year to serve more students and offer more choices.

In partnership with Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS), APWC conducted its Grow Youth program, an ongoing restoration and tree tracking project at Cantrall Buckley Park. Every Friday since fall 2021, the ROCS middle school elective class, Applegate Stewards, went to the park to stake and mark native regrowth species along the Applegate River.

APWC removed a considerable amount of invasive blackberries that were suffocating the streamside vegetation. This work cleared space for the native flora to grow and made room for more native trees to be planted. Using bamboo sticks, the students staked out these native trees and marked them with metal ID tags. Using forestry tools, such as calipers, the students measured the diameter of each tree and tracked its growth. As this is an ongoing project for youth foresters in our community, APWC and ROCS ask those visiting Cantrall Buckley Park to please respect these items.

APWC also carried out its Applegate Outdoor Day program in partnership with ROCS. As part of their outdoor school experience, sixth-grade students from Kennedy, Lone Pine, Washington, and Wilson Elementary schools took part in three days of outdoor, inquiry-based science education in the Applegate Valley. ROCS hosted two of the three instructional days. One day consisted of various activities on the ROCS campus, such as archery, bird watching, and fire ecology. The other day included a natural history hike to the Bigfoot trap along the Collings Mountain Trail. APWC facilitated the third day at Cantrall Buckley Park.

During Applegate Outdoor Day, students engaged in hands-on learning

experiences related to the Applegate watershed. They learned about ecosystem services provided by riparian areas and planted willow cuttings along the river. Under careful supervision, students tested the water quality of the Applegate River and made inferences relating to its overall health. (Pretty healthy, turns out.)

Students also got up close and personal with salmon specimens provided by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Creating a model, students depicted the salmon life cycle and the various factors contributing to the decline in salmon populations.

Lastly, students put on rubber boots and collected their own macroinvertebrate specimens from the river. Students then learned how to identify these creatures and categorized them into groups based on pollution tolerance. Overall, students got a whole-picture approach to the health and interconnectedness of the Applegate watershed and its inhabitants.

APWC also has plans to launch its new Applegate Outdoor School Program in the spring of 2023. This program will be designed and implemented by APWC staff. It will cater to fifth- and sixth-grade students from various school districts in Jackson and Josephine Counties. Applegate Outdoor School Program will consist of three consecutive field days at various sites within the Applegate watershed. It will also include pre- and post-classroom visits to boost student engagement and evaluate the program's efficacy.

The goal of this program is to offer more outdoor school opportunities for local students, as there is a need for additional high-quality outdoor school sites in our region. APWC will be hiring instructors for spring 2023. Candidates for these positions should have a background in environmental education, science, or natural history, and have documented experience working with students in an outdoor setting. Registration for this program will open in the fall. Visit applegatepartnership.com to learn more.


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