



Photo by Linda Kappen

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Applegate Valley Community Newsmagazine
Serving Jackson and Josephine Counties — Circulation: 13,500

Celebrating
~32~
Years

Humbug Creek Road news: Officially a Firewise Community

BY SANG MONTAGE L.A.C.

Fellow Applegaters, Humbuggers, and those who line the Humbug Mountain along Highway 238 to the church—congratulations! We are officially a Firewise Community.

What does this mean for us?

It means this is just the beginning and not an ending.

To continue being an official Firewise Community, we have to log hours when we do any work around properties for fire mitigation. Please connect with one of our Firewise Leaders to obtain more information on how to do this. This is a crucial step for us to keep our community Firewise and to receive federal and matching private grants to help mitigate our costs. You can contact Paul Tipton at ptipton4u2c@gmail.com, Deb Keberle at wickedwoolens@gmail.com, or Natalie Tinker at ntinker03@gmail.com.

New to Humbug?

Expect a friendly knock on your door with a free information packet about becoming part of the Firewise effort and getting your information on our 911 Emergency Fire Tree. This is a private list for fire emergencies only. Please update us with your address, name, phone number, and email

information. Prefer no visitors? Then please connect with Natalie or Sang to add your information, which will remain private and be used only for fire emergencies, to the list. The 911 phone list will be updated and tested annually. We need volunteers to help us share the phone tree duties, and we need a primary fire department contact person. Natalie and I are fun people, and it's wonderful to be of service to our local community. You can contact Natalie Tinker at ntinker03@gmail.com or me at 541-708-3953 or at Sang@MontageOM.com.

Common Questions

Will it lower our homeowner's insurance?

While it may not lower your insurance, it may help prevent loss of coverage or assist in the ability to purchase coverage. Sterling Creek Road is the Applegate's first regional Firewise Community, and some residents report that it did indeed lower their costs. It certainly won't hurt us!

What's involved in staying Firewise?

It's basically creating a defensible space around your home, making sure your driveway is clear for exit

See HUMBUG FIREWISE, page 2.

The Applegate Valley Resilience Hubs initiative

BY JEFF HAAS

An Economic Vitality Plan (EVP) is a strategic roadmap designed by local governments or organizations to strengthen a community's economic health. It outlines actionable steps to attract and retain businesses, create jobs, support local entrepreneurs, support good livelihoods for local residents, and improve overall quality of life in the community. The Applegate Valley is the first unincorporated rural community selected to create this kind of place-based plan with support from a Ford Foundation grant to A Greater Applegate.

To create the EVP, A Greater Applegate is building on the Applegate Valley Vision that was completed in 2022, on two

studies of local economic drivers and a map of rural commercial space that were done with the University of Oregon in 2023 and 2024, and on all its work through the Business Network, industry-focused working groups, and Wander Applegate.

AGA is driving the process, but local business owners, managers, and residents are providing the direct input. We started with a series of focus groups with industries that are currently driving our economy, including Food and Farm, Wineries/Cideries, Forestry and Fuels Reduction, Artists and Makers, Cannabis Growers, Educators, and Outdoor Recreation. We

See ECONOMIC VITALITY PLAN, page 2.



Who's who in the Applegate's wildfire resilience efforts

BY NATHAN GEHRES

As wildfire risk continues to rise across Southern Oregon, an increasing number of organizations are working in the Applegate to strengthen community safety and restore forest health. Over a century of wildfire exclusion has left our forests stressed and our communities more vulnerable, prompting a surge of coordinated efforts aimed at reducing fuels and improving resilience. Applegaters are fortunate to benefit from a strong network of partners dedicated to protecting residents and caring for the landscape. Still, the growing list of groups—and the alphabet soup of acronyms attached to them—can be confusing. The summary below is not exhaustive, but it highlights the major organizations and projects currently active, or soon to begin, in the Applegate.

1. Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council (APWC)

APWC manages several active projects focused on improving home defense and ingress/egress safety on private lands.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP): Better known as the Applegate Fire Plan update, this plan is essential for wildfire-risk reduction for several reasons:

- An updated CWPP is required for most wildfire-related grants and will provide eligibility in both Jackson and Josephine counties.
- Once completed, it will offer strategic prioritization across private and public lands, informed by 15 community meetings and a watershed-wide survey.

- The project has already leveraged more than \$250,000 in federal and state investments.
- Completion is expected by the end of 2026.

Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project (UAAWRP): A long-term effort focused on private lands between Humbug Creek Road, the eastern boundary of the Applegate Watershed, and Applegate Lake. Now in its fourth year, the project has completed extensive fuels-reduction work.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS): Written by APWC and funded through NRCS, this project partnered with six landowners

to treat 262 acres, with two additional landowners planning treatments on 215 acres.

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) Small Forestland Grants (SFG)

- 2025: \$269,000; treated 186 acres and 822 hazard trees across 45 properties, employing 11 local contractors.
- 2026: Two additional grants awarded: \$296,034 to treat 70 acres of dead Douglas-fir along China Gulch Road, and \$165,485 to treat 67 acres within the Kubli Road and Wagon Trail Drive Firewise Communities.

See APPLEGATE WILDFIRE, page 3.

This issue brought in more thoughtful, generous submissions than we had room to include in print. A few pieces have been published on our website instead: Community: Creating and Sustaining JCC with Heart by Julie Raefield; Why I'm Voting Yes for the Williams Fire District Levy by Heather Glass; Where the mountain meets the moment by Tuula Rebhahn. We deeply appreciate everyone who shared their work with us and hope you'll visit applegater.org to read it.

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OBITUARY

Kenneth “Ken” Wilburn May
October 23, 1940 — June 1, 2026

BY LYNN TOWNS AND THE MAY FAMILY

Applegate resident Kenneth Wilburn May passed away this past June.

Ken was born in Tillar, Arkansas, and spent his childhood years in Dumas, Arkansas. He worked in the cotton fields, earning money to purchase two cows, which he milked every day. Those early years instilled in him the value of hard work and responsibility, traits that defined his character throughout his life.

Leaving Arkansas in 1959 to join the United States Marine Corps, Ken spent four years at Camp Pendleton, California, and traveled to Okinawa, Japan. He was a field wireman, which was ironic, as he did not like heights. He always completed his duties, though, and stayed out of trouble.

While in the Marines, he met his wife, Beverly, at a skating rink one weekend. They wrote letters back and forth for nine months and dated for a year while he completed his time in the Marines. After his discharge on April 15, 1963, he and Bev eloped in Las Vegas on April 20, 1963. Bev hooked him into another contract five days later—for life.

Ken and Bev moved to Fullerton, California, where he worked as a truck driver for RJ Reynolds, Hawaiian Punch, Del Monte Foods, and, later, Lucky Stores. They lived in Fullerton for approximately 40 years, where they built a beautiful life and a loving family, raising their two daughters, Barbara and Bonnie.

Upon Ken’s retirement, he and Bev moved to the Applegate Valley. In Oregon for 24 years, Ken spent his days working on his property, taking care of all his animals, and spending countless hours working in his garden. Gardening was his



passion, and he loved being able to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for his family and neighbors, as well as for Access and Food for Friends. Ken valued his friendship with neighbors and acquaintances. He was always available to share a story or joke or to lend a hand with a project, big or small.

Ken passed away peacefully in his home at the age of 85. He was a very quiet, soft-spoken man whose life was filled with kindness, generosity, humility, and resilience. In celebration of his life and passion for ice cream, the Hogan Road neighborhood hosted and thoroughly enjoyed an ice cream social. Oh, the stories that were shared...!

Ken’s final resting place is at Eagle Point Veterans Cemetery, where he was placed to rest on June 24 in a private family ceremony.

Lynn Towns
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■ **APPLEGATE RESILIENCE HUBS**

Continued from page 1.

then hosted a round of meetings, based on location, at each of the Applegate Valley’s “village hubs”: Williams, Ruch, Applegate, and Murphy (the Wilderville meeting is still to come). Each hub meeting was attended mostly by brick-and-mortar business owners from that “village.” The industry working groups provided insight into current conditions, challenges, and opportunities for those industries as a whole. The Village Hub meetings allowed for local flavor and for the community spirit of Applegate Valley residents and their passion for their home here.

We heard from business people whose families have been in the Applegate for generations and from newcomers who recently started businesses here. We heard from businesses that exclusively serve Applegate Valley residents and from others geared toward visitors or remote customers. There was broad agreement on how much the changes around cannabis have affected the Applegate and the entire region. There were concerns about a lack of affordable housing, the shortage of commercial real estate, and challenges for the commercial sites that do exist, as well as a broad consensus that county regulations are not currently helpful to economic success and growth here. There were many who expressed a desire for more opportunities for young people so that they could choose to stay here and have a solid livelihood.

There was also a very strong sense of commitment to the community and a focus on finding solutions for the next phase of the Applegate economy. One common

theme was that the Applegate needs to find a way to increase economic activity and community prosperity without over-development. A paraphrase might be “We choose to live here for a reason; let’s not turn the community into a place we no longer want to live in.” Many attendees promoted a “buy local” approach, and many business owners suggested ways that local businesses can cooperate on a win/win basis. Businesses in the Applegate sometimes struggle to reach residents, and AGA is actively working on this problem through the Applegate Business Network and the online business listings in the Applegate Business Directory at applegateconnect.org/directory-categories/.

You are invited to participate in a last round of community input before we start writing the EVP itself through our online survey. You can access the survey at surveymonkey.com/r/KXFSNTS. This survey builds on several years of prior community visioning and economic studies (see that prior work on the AGA website at agreaterapplegate.org/economic-studies/). Your responses to the survey will help shape priorities, identify projects, and guide the placement of future effort and investment. Results will be summarized in the final public plan, which we expect to publish this winter. Please do take a few minutes to respond to the survey, and look for updates about the EVP on the AGA website and here in the *Applegater*.

Jeff Haas
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Vincent Philip Alionis
December 17, 1950 — June 26, 2026

BY MARY ALIONIS

Vincent Philip Alionis, of Whistling Duck Farm in Provolt, died at home on June 26, 2026. Vince was born December 17, 1950, in Floral Park, New York, to Agnes and Vincent Alones, and grew up with his parents, grandparents, and sister, Vinessa. He had a deep connection to his grandfather Peter and learned a love of growing food and building from him. He spent his early adulthood in Montauk, lobster fishing and learning carpentry before moving to New York City, where he worked in the gem and jewelry trade and built sets for photo shoots.

Vince was a lifelong student of history. He came of age during the Vietnam War and the early environmental movement and learned to question the official narrative early. He wanted nothing more than to start an organic farm when he met his wife, Mary, in Dallas, Texas. Together they moved to southern Oregon and began Whistling Duck Farm in 1991. In Shady Cove and then on their own beautiful property on Elk Creek Road in Trail, Vince was finally able to create the farmstead he had envisioned, building infrastructure, developing farm systems, working in the woods, clearing blackberries along Sugarpine Creek, living his best life. In 2003, he and Mary relocated to better farming land in the Applegate Valley, where they raised their children, Zosha and Kazi, and over the years built a dynamic farm, kitchen, and on-farm store.

Vince and Mary were a part of the Rogue Valley growers markets for

decades. They also sold their crops to local food stores and restaurants and through their CSA program, and they opened their own farm store in 2014. Vince was particularly well-known in the Ashland Market, attending consistently for over 25 years. He was a respected part of the local and regional market-farming community, collaborating on projects and teaching and mentoring dozens of interns and employees over the years, many of whom went on to start farms

locally and across the nation. His humor was an eccentric blend of “New York-meets-Texas,” and many who worked with and spent time with him fondly remember his stories, signature sayings, and mischievous

smile. He was constantly learning and freely shared his wisdom and knowledge on farming, building, and life with all who asked. He had a cooperative and collaborative mindset and wanted everyone to succeed and to find their path.

While Vince loved farming and working the land, by far his greatest happiness came from his family and seeing his children grow and thrive. Vince is survived by his wife, Mary Alionis; daughter, Zosha Alionis; son, Kazimer Alionis; sister, Vinessa Alones; and nephews AJ Fraley and Eric Fraley.

It’s been such good fortune to spend this life together, Vincent, my beloved husband and beloved father, brother, uncle, and friend. You will be missed.

Mary Alionis
wdfmary@gmail.com



■ **HUMBUG FIREWISE**

Continued from page 1.

and entry of emergency vehicles, and getting a Firewise audit if you want to join our efforts. You could attend a Firewise meeting if you would like more in-person knowledge. We will be hosting two annual meetings for Humbuggers, in spring and fall, for in-person information and updates.

Please join us for a meeting, or contact one of our Humbug Firewise Leaders:

Humbug Firewise Community Leaders:
Paul Tipton: ptipton4u2cc@gmail.com
Deb Keberle: wickedwoolens@gmail.com
Natalie Tinker: ntinker03@gmail.com

Are there resources available for disabled, elderly, or economically challenged residents?

We are working to create an infrastructure to make this happen. When we become certified, we can request grants to help those in need to create and maintain defensible space. Let us know if you’re interested by signing up for updates.

What are some examples of defensible space?

Cleaning out gutters and covering them with mesh wire to prevent buildup of leaves. Keeping the underside of decks and porches clear of flammable debris. Replacing missing or damaged roof vents with one-eighth-inch metal mesh. Limbing trees.

What can we do in the meantime to create defensible space?

There are some free resources available now, like chipping and dumpster use from the Applegate Fire District. Call them for more information and to schedule a dumpster for you to load up with flammable material.

Connections

Learn more about what Firewise is at firewise.org. Join our Private Humbug Facebook group.

Thanks for reading! I hope you join our Firewise efforts and come to the meeting in the fall!

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Rooted In Hope’s Native Oak Legacy Project grows more than trees

BY CATHY RODGERS

The best time to plant an oak was 100 years ago. The second-best time is today.

Across the Applegate Valley, a quiet movement is taking root—one that will shape our landscape for generations to come. Rooted In Hope’s Native Oak Legacy Project is bringing together students, educators, artists, conservationists, businesses, and neighbors in an inspiring community effort to restore one of southern Oregon’s most iconic native trees: the Oregon white oak.

Supported by a \$10,000 grant from the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, the project is a partnership of Rooted In Hope, the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council (APWC), Ruch Outdoor Community School, and dozens of community volunteers who share a common vision: restoring native oak habitats while inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards. The heart of the project lies with students and landowners.

This fall, fourth and fifth graders at Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS) will begin growing Oregon white oaks from locally collected acorns. Working alongside APWC educators, ROCS students will learn about oak ecology, wildlife habitat, watershed health, climate resilience, and the important role native trees play in sustaining healthy ecosystems. Rather than simply reading about conservation in a classroom, these students will nurture seedlings from seed to sapling before helping plant them throughout the Applegate Valley.

It is experiential learning at its finest—where science, stewardship, and community service come together. The Native Oak Legacy Project recognizes that restoring landscapes requires more than funding and volunteers. It requires a community that values both nature and culture.

That spirit was beautifully demonstrated during Art in the Oaks, hosted by Gregg and

Jennifer Payne at their Ruch home this spring. Organized by A Greater Applegate, the event showcased how art, music, literature, local food, and conservation can inspire meaningful community connections.

Visitors explored Gregg Payne’s interactive sound sculptures, teleidoscopes, and immersive installations while enjoying live music by Conrad Rogmans and locally prepared food from Jefferson Farm Kitchen. Artists—including Katie Walker of Sticks and Stones Studios, Sweet Colene Art, Diamond, Tongue Drum, and S.O. Bees—displayed their work throughout the afternoon.

Katie Walker’s participation reflected another important investment in local youth. Through grant-supported programming, Sticks and Stones Studios provides free art education to students at Ruch Outdoor Community School, ensuring rural children have opportunities to develop creativity alongside academic learning.



Bella Payne and Marion Ginet hard at work nurturing the acorns collected at the kickoff of the Applegate Valley Native Oak Tree Initiative. Photo by Cathy Rodgers.

Throughout the event, Rooted In Hope volunteers introduced visitors to the Native Oak Legacy Project, demonstrating how anyone can collect, germinate, and grow Oregon white oak acorns at home. Families left not only inspired by local art but equipped to participate in restoring the native habitat themselves.

See **NATIVE OAK LEGACY PROJECT**, page 17.

In your own backyard: The Rogue Flavor Showcase

Finding my foodshed—and an invitation to find yours

BY ALISON SEXAUER

When I moved to the Applegate Valley, I arrived from a place already famous for the abundance of its local food—a region where I’d spent 15 years working on farms and running farmers’ markets. I thought I understood what a foodshed could offer: the way a plate of food can be a map of soil, water, and the people who tend them. I came to southern Oregon looking for that kind of connection to place. I found it, and then some.

One of the first surprises was cheese and meat, abundant here in ways I hadn’t experienced before. I lived down the road from the old By George farmstand: duck eggs, bread from Rise Up!, locally raised beef, fresh cheese, all there for the taking and a few dollars left behind. A quick stop at the farmers’ market and I had a week’s menu. Within months I’d met the local salmon fisherman who travels once a year to fish one of the most sustainable fisheries in

Alaska. There were milk shares, from both goat and cow, just up the road. I had come seeking a foodshed, and the Applegate provided.

Then I found the Rogue Flavor Guide, at the time just a few years old and now in its 23rd year. It didn’t just list farms and makers; it connected me to them: the growers, the cheesemakers, the bakers, the people whose hands are in the soil and the ovens. Something happens when you’re connected, through the food you eat, to the actual soil and water of a place. Whether you find it by hunting, foraging in the wild, or foraging your local farmers’ market and grocery aisles for something that still has its full flavor, its full nutrition, and, maybe most important, its story, it is an old and human thing. It roots you.

That’s the spirit behind the inaugural Rogue Flavor Showcase, coming to the historic Bigham Knoll campus in Jacksonville on September 5, from 2-7 pm. Organized by the

Rogue Valley Food System Network, it brings together a fusion of people who make this region delicious: growers, winemakers, brewers, fermenters, bakers, chocolatiers, herbalists, chefs, and artisan food makers, all gathered in one beautiful place on one glorious late-summer afternoon.

The lineup reads like a tour of what makes this valley worth tasting. Rogue Creamery, whose blue cheese has won world championships, will offer samples alongside Troon Vineyards, pouring wine grown with biodynamic methods on Applegate soils. Circadian Cellars and Terrene Winery and Cidery represent the valley’s beverage scene. Wylde Kraut, Southern Oregon Sourdough, Falkways Bakery, and Boogie’s Hatchery bring the craft of fermentation and bread to the festivities. Satori Farms, Naturespirit Herbs, and Della Rose Pasta Co. round things out.

Throughout the afternoon, the culinary stage will host chef demos using all-local ingredients, featuring our very own Chef Kristen of Jefferson Farm Kitchen and Carl Krause of Wilder Cooking, plus family-friendly cooking demos for the kids. Two panel discussions dig deeper: one brings chefs and farmers together for storytelling about the relationships behind

a dish, and the other tackles the practical question of how, where, and why to buy local.

Food trucks Pistolás, Grip N Grub, Farm Bus Bistro, and Jacksonville’s own Black Barn Kitchen round out the afternoon, providing a full meal option.

You may have driven past these orchards, fields, and farmstands a hundred times. Picked up a local wine on the way home from work. Grabbed a loaf of sourdough at the Saturday market without a thought for the hands that made it. Living here, we can let that bounty fade into scenery—familiar and easy to take for granted.

September 5 is a chance to look again—to meet the people behind what grows and what’s made here, and to remember that the flavors of this valley have been in your backyard all along.

Come hungry. Leave connected.
Rogue Flavor Showcase is September 5 from 2-7 pm at Bigham Knoll Campus, Jacksonville. Tickets are \$20 and include a commemorative glass. More details and tickets can be found at rvfoodsystem.org/rogue-flavor-showcase.
Alison Sexauer
alison@rvfoodsystem.org

■ APPLEGATE WILDFIRE

Continued from page 1.

US Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act Subaward (via Sustainable Northwest):

A \$2 million investment supporting UAAWRP. In the first year, 336 acres were treated, and 1,716 hazard trees were cut and processed. This three-year effort will complete a minimum of 750 acres. For more information on these projects, please contact Nathan Gehres, nathan@apwc.info, 541-890-9989

2. Applegate Fire District (AFD) and Williams Fire District (WFD)

AFD and WFD provide several resources to residents and are a key partner in wildfire-preparedness planning.

- Chipper and Haul Trailer Program (no cost to residents)

- Property assessments
- AFD Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization (PIER) Grant for fuels treatments on Humbug Creek Road (available late 2026)
- Title II funds for ingress/egress fuels treatments throughout the service area
- Josephine County Emergency Management Grant Dollars for Williams residents: [josephinecounty.gov/departments/emergency_management/prepare_\(activities_before_an_emergency\)/defensible_space_project.php](http://josephinecounty.gov/departments/emergency_management/prepare_(activities_before_an_emergency)/defensible_space_project.php)
- Essential partners in CWPP development
- 3. Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative (SOFRC)

- Prescription for Safety roadside buffer treatments along Thompson Creek Road (no cost to residents)
- Key partner and contractor in CWPP development
- 4. Rogue Forest Partners (RFP)
- Cedar Flat fuels-reduction treatments on BLM lands adjacent to private properties in the Williams area
- Upper Applegate Watershed Restoration—2,648 acres treated through Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and USFS Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program grants
- 5. NRCS Conservation Implementation Strategy—Williams Area
- Fuels-reduction treatments on private lands in the Williams community
- 6. Firewise Community Development in the Applegate Watershed

- Firebrand Collective: Supports Firewise formation in Jackson County
- AFD & Williams Rural Fire Protection District: Rachel Couch assisting Williams residents with Firewise formation
- Josephine County Firewise Coordinator (Mike McLaughlin): Supports Firewise development in Josephine County communities

I hope this overview of the organizations and projects working across the Applegate watershed is helpful. The momentum behind these efforts—and the progress already made—reflects a shared commitment to reducing wildfire risk and protecting the landscapes and communities of our home.

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POETRY CORNER

Country Living

By Anya Paradiso

The goat bleated in the pasture—
a sound of surprise and indignation:
her first birthing.

The first kid fell before we reached the fence, sleek and dark and wet—
white with black spots, she was up and jumping in two
minutes flat.

We waited about 10 minutes for the second,
the mother took time out to clean the first one,
licking her from nose to tail while the kid
bumped her head into various parts of her mother
experimentally,
not really knowing what she was
looking for.

The male kid came out slowly and took longer to stand up—
all spindly legged and awkward,
black with white markings.
By the time he took his first vertical leap
his sister had already figured out
how to manage the teat.

He wandered over to check it out, shouldered her aside,
and soon they were both sucking at the udder,
their little tails twitching like the small keys on
mechanical toys
winding down.

It was a beautiful day—big billowy clouds,
gulls screaming as they flew over to the ocean,
sky so blue it made your eyes ache.

Two days later the male kid curled up to take a nap
and died.

Born in San Francisco, Anya attended U.C. Berkeley. She moved to the Applegate in 1972, where she and her former husband bought 11 acres and built their log cabin, starting with logging their own trees. Over the years, she has gardened and raised goats, chickens, ducks, dogs, and cats. She earned her Master Gardener and Master Land Steward certifications. She wrote feature news stories for the Medford Mail Tribune for 13 years until the paper folded. Her hobbies include antiques, cooking, jewelry making, silversmithing, basket making, sewing, stained glass, monoprinting, and planting trees.

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

Full-Rip 9.0

The Next Big Earthquake in the Pacific Northwest
by Sandi Doughton

BY PAUL TIPTON

Most people living in southern Oregon are aware that earthquakes are somewhat of a concern locally, but if you haven't lived here for at least 33 years, you've hardly felt a tremor, since the last quakes to really give the area a good shake occurred in 1993, centered in the mountains near Klamath Falls. Two people died, and at least 1,000 buildings were damaged, particularly brick buildings in downtown Klamath Falls. Personally, our family experienced it in a mobile home on Humbug Creek as a roar like a freight train coming at us and a strong shaking that moved things around, but there was no real damage. The quakes were actually a series of three: a 4.2 foreshock, then 5.9 and 6.0 main shocks.

But Sandi Doughton's *Full-Rip 9.0* tells the story behind the next Big One, an exponentially larger quake than the Klamath one, a quake that is likely to disrupt life for all of the Pacific coast states, from California through Oregon and Washington. This well-researched book brings together deep science and long-held knowledge of local tribes as well as Japanese records from over three centuries ago to conclude that our area is overdue for this mega-event, since the last one occurred around 9 pm on January 26, 1700, and the "normal" cycle for its occurrence is 246 years, making ours 80 years overdue! That this can be stated as fact is amazing to me and is due to the work of many people over many years—the fascinating story of this book.

Here in southern Oregon, we live on the edge of the North American Plate, which

is being forced upward by the eastward subduction of another tectonic plate, the Juan de Fuca Plate, underneath us. At the same time, the Pacific Plate is pushing the Juan de Fuca Plate northward. The force of these movements, though only 40-45 mm per year, builds up until something gives way, creating earthquakes and the resulting volcanic eruptions, releasing the built-up energy. The magnitude of the Big One locally will likely be at least 8.2 according to geologists, which would cause

two to three minutes of intense shaking, enough, according to local retired geologist Mark Prchal, to likely cause sewer pipes embedded in stream gravels in the valley towns to "float" to the surface due to liquefaction caused by the shaking. Not a pleasant thought, but a possible reality, since it happened in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2011, in an area with similar geology, with quakes measuring just 6.2 to 6.7.

I believe it's important for all of us on the West Coast to be knowledgeable about and aware of what is definitely possible and probably likely to happen at some time. When it happens, there is the likelihood of major damage to roads, bridges, and power and communication infrastructure. Locally, the elevated freeway through Medford could possibly collapse. And though you won't have the opportunity or warning to flee ahead of an earthquake, you can prepare to be able to shelter in place afterward with stored food and water for at least a few weeks.

Reading this book certainly won't save you from an earthquake, but it will enlighten you about how it happens and what we know about the process. Hopefully it will stir you to think ahead about reacting to and preparing for an emergency that would cause as much disruption and damage as the Big One.

Paul W. Tipton
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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!
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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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Applegater Newsmagazine
PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530
applegater.org

Supporting Applegate’s youth through summer camp

BY CHARLOTTE HYDE

Widely known among educators and parents is the “summer slide,” a phenomenon in which youth regress academically during the summer months. A countermeasure to this slide can be found in summer camp programs. Beyond providing childcare, summer camps combine learning and fun in a relaxed setting. This supportive environment allows youth to discover new interests and indulge curiosity while building self-confidence and social skills. Once summer is over, they return to school eager and ready to learn.

It was with this understanding that the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council’s education team carried out the second season of Applegate Outdoor Summer Camp (AOSC) at Cantrall

Buckley Park. Following a successful pilot season in 2025, program staff were excited to serve families across the Applegate over a six-week season. In line with our goal to combine learning with summer fun, each day at AOSC was packed with science explorations, games, and art projects. Popular science activities included building bird nests, dissecting mushrooms, and excavating “fossils” from frozen “rocks.” The biggest hits among the arts-and-crafts projects were painting wooden snakes, constructing felt animals, and learning the basics of embroidery.

Some special activities were prompted by our weekly themes. “Outdoor Adventurers” week presented exciting challenges, including a treasure hunt and shelter building. During “Friends of the

Forest” week, campers contributed to ecological restoration by planting native seedlings in Cantrall Buckley’s riparian zone. We also hosted guest presenters who supplemented weekly themes with their specialized knowledge. We thank Bugs-R-Us, Jackson County Search and Rescue, local fiber artist and educator Shannon Rodine, Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative, and Pollinator Project Rogue Valley for their contributions to AOSC.

Despite this diverse lineup of activities, the most popular element of camp was the Applegate River. Not a single camper was immune to the excitement of splashing around with their peers. This enduring enthusiasm highlights the
See APPLEGATE SUMMER CAMP, page 14.

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

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Editorial Calendar

ISSUE	DEADLINE
FALL (Sept - Nov)	August 1 <i>Earth - Air</i>
WINTER (Dec - Feb)....	November 1 <i>Holiday - Arts</i>
SPRING (March - May) ...	February 1 <i>History - Heritage</i>
SUMMER (June - Aug)	May 1 <i>Fire - Water</i>

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The *Applegater* is the only newsmagazine covering the entire Applegate Valley. With a circulation of 13,000 and a readership of more than 20,000, the *Applegater* covers Jacksonville, Ruch, Applegate, Williams, Murphy, Wilderville, Wonder, Jerome Prairie, and areas of Medford and Grants Pass. For more information, contact:

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Next deadline: November 1

Cover Photo Credit

Ornamental Lilac and Dogwood trees stand out while soaking in the fall Applegate sunshine, by Linda Kappan.
...
Have a photo for the Winter 2026 *Applegater*? Email it in large format at 300 dpi to gater@applegater.org.

Corrections

The *Applegater* is committed to publishing accurate information in its news articles, correcting errors of fact, and clarifying misleading statements. Send suggested corrections to Editor in Chief Annika Hodges at annika@applegater.org.

— Applegate Library — Falling into autumn with the Applegate Library

BY CHRISTINE GRUBB



You probably already know that having a JCLS library card means getting access to over 400,000 titles in our collection—but it also means digital downloads and streaming, access to dozens of online research and learning services, and our Library of Things, which includes a growing collection, Kindle eReaders, instruments, and much more. There are also no late fees, signup fees, or program fees. A JCLS card is free for all Jackson County residents (with one form of identification that matches the Jackson County address on your library card application). Come to the Applegate Library to see the Rainbow Installation!

Upcoming events

Cello Concert with Lisa Truelove, 3+ years. Local cellist Lisa Truelove will serenade the Applegate community with a “potpourri of classical and folk melodies.” Free to attend and to be enjoyed by all ages! 11-noon, Tuesday, September 15.

Learn About Australian Animals with John Jackson of Bugs-R-Us, 3+ years. Go down under as we explore Australian animals and history. Touch the pelts from a Koala, Dingo, Wombat, and Kangaroo, as well as feathers from the Emu, Kookaburra, and Kiwi. 2:30-3:30 pm, Saturday, September 19.

Plant Your Own Marigold, all ages | **Planta tu propio cempasúchil**, para todas las edades. Known in Mexico as the flower of the dead, the marigold plays an essential role in Day of the Dead ofrendas (altars). Get ready to celebrate the holiday by planting your own marigold seed; decorate the pot and watch your marigold grow! This program will be presented in English. 2:30-3:30 pm, Friday, October 2.

Yoga Nidra w/Sound Healing, 18+ years. Release stress, soothe tension, and reset your nervous system in this deeply restorative session. No prior experience is needed; just bring your body, your breath, and

an openness to rest. Bring your own yoga mat or borrow one. 5-6 pm Friday, October 9.

Veterans Outreach, 18+ years. A veteran service officer will assist veterans and their families with services, including VA disability applications, burial benefits, widow benefits, discharge upgrades, and more. For more information, call 541-774-8214. 10 am-3 pm, October 13 and December 8.

Rainbow Sand Art Terrariums, teens and adults. Want a pop of color for your desk, countertop, or windowsill? Layer rainbow sand into jars and top with some (faux) succulents, creating a colorful terrarium. 2:30-3:30 pm, Friday, October 16.

Make your own Mini-Piñata, 8+ years | **Has tu propia mini piñata**, 8+ años. Learn about the rich history of piñatas and create your own. Fill them up with a mix of spicy and sweet candies, then break them open and enjoy! This program will be presented in English. 2:30-3:30 pm, Friday, October 30.

History at Your Fingertips, 18+ years. Using hands-on practice, you will learn about Oregon’s biggest databases and some national databases that have a lot of information on Oregon. Customized for your community, this program explores the databases for solving local research problems. A Q&A will follow the program. Please bring your own laptop, tablet, or smartphone. 2-4 pm, Friday, November 6.

DIY Mason Jar Luminaries, 18+ years. Slow down, get cozy, sip some warm cider, all while creating a fall-themed mason jar luminary. From dried leaves and twigs to acorns and cinnamon sticks, decorate to your creativity’s content. Add warmth and light to your fall tablescape or give it as a gift. All supplies will be provided while they last. 2:30-3:30 pm, Friday, November 13.

Reminders

Veterans Outreach will be here from 10 am-3 pm the second Tuesday of every even month (6/9, 8/11, 10/13, and 12/8 for the rest of the year).

A Tech Ed Specialist will be here on Tuesdays from 10 am-12:30 pm on a first-come, first-served basis, or make an appointment at teched@jcls.org, or by phone at 541-734-3990.

The Applegate Library meeting room can be booked (with a full-service library card) for your meeting, program, or event (even when the library is closed) at jcls.libcal.com/reserve/ap-meeting.

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

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

Christine Grubb
cgrubb@jcls.org
541-846-7346



The Rainbow Installation at the Applegate Library. Photo by Christine Grubb.

— Ruch Library — Autumn at Ruch Library

BY MEGAN PINDER

The programs and services listed below, as well as our Seed Library, Wi-Fi, and cozy spaces, are free and accessible to every community member, including those living outside of Jackson County. For Jackson County residents, library cards are also free!

Seed Saving, all ages. We’ll cover the basics so you can enjoy resilient plants, money savings, community connection, and participation in the magic of life through seeds. Noon-2 pm, Saturday, September 12.

Cultivating Companions, 18+ years. Join the Jackson County Master Gardeners to learn about indoor plants and develop skills you can take to your outside gardens. Have fun making garden art and meeting new friends! Come to any of the seven classes in this series (you do not need to attend them all). 3-5 pm, Saturdays, September 12 through October 24.

Make Your Own Mini-Piñata, 8+ years. Learn about the rich history of piñatas and create your own. 1-2 pm, Saturday, September 19.

Community Ofrenda, all ages. Join us in celebrating Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead), a Latin American holiday honoring loved ones who have passed. Help create a community ofrenda (altar) by decorating a sugar skull or picture frame, or bring a photo of a loved one to place on our altar. Drop by during open hours, October 1 until November 3.

Hoopla Overview, 18+ years. Learn how to use Hoopla to access a free catalog of movies, TV shows, music, eBooks, audiobooks, and comics. 2:30-3:30 pm, Thursday, October 1.

Paint Your Own Mini Pumpkin, all ages. Celebrate the fall season with a pumpkin-decorating program! Noon-1 pm, Saturday, October 3.

Pollinator Pals Seed Science Workshop, all ages. Join the Pollinator Pals team for a seed science workshop where we’ll dissect beans under microscopes, use dancing to prepare wildflower seeds, and learn how to get your own pollinator garden started! 1-2 pm, Saturday, October 10.

Rainbow Suncatcher Craft, 8+ years. Using a template, colored cellophane, and your imagination, create your own suncatcher to reflect rainbows in your own home! 1-2:30 pm, Saturday, November 7.

Owls and Owl Pellets with John Jackson of Bugs-R-Us, all ages. Get “hands-on” with real owl pellets! Play detective with latex gloves, tweezers,

and magnifying glasses to discover what the owls have eaten. Learn about owls in the environment and the part they play in the food-web cycle. 1-2 pm, Saturday, November 14.

History at Your Fingertips, 18+ years. Gain hands-on practice using Oregon’s best databases, as well as some national databases that have information on Oregon. Customized for your community, you’ll explore the databases to solve local research problems. Registration required at jcls.org/events or by calling 541-899-7438. Bring your own laptop, tablet, or smartphone. 1-3 pm, Saturday, November 21.

Death Cafe Conversation, 13+ years. Facilitated by Southern Oregon Living and Dying Alliance, this is an informal, respectful space to share stories, ask questions, and discuss the sometimes difficult topic of mortality in a way that brings connection and insight. 4-5:30 pm on first Thursdays.

World Snack Tour, 10+ years. Discover a new country through music, trivia, and the best snacks and candies a country has to offer. We provide the samples; you bring a spirit of adventure and curiosity about the world! 1-2 pm on fourth Saturdays.

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

Community Resource Help, all ages. Need help with food, shelter, medical providers, etc.? Meet with a member of our Community Resource Team by appointment or drop in. Noon-4 pm, Wednesdays.

Computer and Tech Help, all ages. Meet with a Technology Education Specialist by appointment or drop in. 2-4 pm, Thursdays.

Read Play Talk, 0-5 years. Discover how children learn through play and daily activities: singing, telling stories, creating art, and having fun! Open to everyone— young children and their families and caregivers. 10:30 am-noon, Thursdays.

Community Yoga, 13+ years. Join us for an all-levels yoga class taught by an expert local instructor. Registration required at jcls.org/events or by calling 541-899-7438. Bring your own mat. 9-10 am on second and fourth Wednesdays.

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

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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Celebrating 250 years of independence in America

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

On July 8, members of Friends of Ruch Library (FORL), library staff, and community folks from Ruch and surrounding areas participated together in the “Sharing the Spirit of America 250” program inside the library. At 3 pm, 32 people read the entire Declaration of Independence together, along with people throughout the United States.

A tidbit of history: July 8 was the date of the first reading of the Declaration of Independence to the public at large.

Many thanks to all of you who participated at Ruch and to Hawaii’s America 250 Commission for the inspiration and planning of this event. On their website, they had a map of the United States with markers of all the participating groups and individuals across America, and Ruch had a marker!

Our collective voices filled the library with the reading. Then John Frohnmayer picked up his guitar and led the group with old-time, patriotic, and country-style songs, followed by refreshing ice-cream sundaes and delicious baked goodies from Rebecca Krack, owner of the new local bakery, Lemon Queen. The wonderful conversations led to new friendships and an overwhelming response to “let’s make this an annual event.” So mark your calendars for July 8, 2027, and let’s have a community and FORL committee to plan it. Just let me, as FORL’s president, know you are interested.

A huge thank-you goes to Arnie Klott at Pronto Print and FORL member Pat Gordon for helping sponsor FORL’s reusable 10’ x 4’ banner, and another thank-you to Ramsey Realty for allowing us to hang the banner and advertise the event on their large signboard.

FORL News on Summer Book Selling

The Book Barn will be closed in September due to the probable hot weather, opening again on Saturday, October 3, from noon to 4 pm. Due to the extreme heat, book sorting is also on hold until the cooler days of October. Bring your donations and shop when it’s cooler! If you have several boxes of books to donate, call me at 541-846-7501, and we’ll make arrangements to put them in the sorting area.

The A-Frame bookstore is open, with air conditioning, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 1 to 3 pm. The “new to the A-Frame” books are on the left as you enter the store. “Special Treasures,” a new section on the left wall, has vintage books to current books for \$5.00 each. Don’t forget to check the “Local Authors” display just inside the entrance on your right. Many of these special collections sell right away, so remember to check each visit.

We are continuing to receive challenged and banned books and classics in varying conditions that are available to purchase. Books are \$2.00 each, with children’s and junior’s books for \$.50 each. Special collections are marked with the cost.

Leave us a comment when you visit the A-Frame bookstore or the Book Barn. You are a voice in our community, and we’d like to have suggestions for great books and shopping experiences and for future programs that feature the outdoors, special opportunities, history, and more. Sharing lifelong learning is part of our mission, and we’d appreciate your thoughts and whatever time you might be able to offer. We have an awesome rural community, thanks to so many of us working together!

Janis Mohr-Tipton
FORL President
541-846-7501



Janis Mohr-Tipton is inviting you to join in the Independence Day celebration, which was well attended and will perhaps become an annual event. Photo by Caleb Galloway.



“Special Treasures,” the most recent section of the store’s collections. This one features titles from vintage to current. Photo by Barbara Krack.

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— Williams Library — Autumn at Williams Library

BY SARAH MEYER

Williams Library events and programs are offered at no charge and are open to the public. Registration is not required, and a library card is not necessary to participate in library events and programs.

Featured events

Visit josephinelibrary.org calendar to learn about weekly special events at all library branches.

K9 Reading Buddies

Stop by the Williams Branch to read with Shadow, Williams’s friendly K9 Reading Buddy. This program offers a welcoming, low-pressure environment where children can practice reading aloud with a trained therapy dog and develop a love of reading. 3-4 pm on Tuesdays.

Williams Weekly Storytime

A themed storytime and craft session designed to spark creativity and joy in a safe, family-friendly setting. 11 am-noon every Friday.

Adult Williams Book Club

Join a welcoming community of readers to explore engaging books, share perspectives, and build connections through thoughtful conversation and a shared love of reading. Noon-1 pm the last Saturday of every month.

Looking to support the library?

One of the best ways to help is simply to use it—every item you check out or suggest strengthens the library and helps shape a collection that reflects community interests. Explore the online catalog at josephinelibrary.org to discover a wide selection of books, magazines, ebooks, and audiobooks.

Can’t find what you’re looking for? Suggest a new purchase for the library collection. Start at josephinelibrary.org/catalog/suggest-a-purchase.

Declaration 250: Reading with Lois

Read together with former Oregon History Teacher of the Year Lois MacMillan as our community explores *The American Revolution and the Fate of the World*, by Richard Bell, in honor of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Book copies are available for checkout at the library thanks to support from Oregon Humanities.

Join us Thursday, September 3 from 5:30-6:30 pm at the Grants Pass branch for a community book discussion.

For more information and to explore 250 years of American ideals through books, archives, and resources that shaped the Declaration of Independence and continue to influence us, visit josephinelibrary.org and from the Education/Research menu, select the Declaration 250 subject guide.

Support Your Child’s Learning with Brainfuse HelpNow

Looking for homework help you can trust? With Brainfuse HelpNow, available

through Josephine Community Library, parents can give their children access to safe, reliable academic support—all for free with a library card. Live tutors help guide students through their work, encouraging learning without giving away the answers.

Key features include:

- Live one-on-one tutoring in math, science, reading, writing, and more
- Expert feedback on essays and research papers through the Writing Lab
- Homework tools like study guides, flashcards, and other resources to build independent learning skills
- Language support for English language learners
- Online chess practice and live tutoring to develop strategic thinking and problem-solving skills

To get started, visit josephinelibrary.org and choose Online Learning Resources from the Education/Research menu. Log in using your library card number. **Read local. Research nationally. Explore history.**

With NewsBank, your Josephine Community Library card gives you free access to trusted newspapers from Oregon and across the US—all from your computer, tablet, or phone. Find recent publications from the *Register-Guard* (Eugene), the *Bulletin* (Bend), the *Statesman Journal* (Salem), *Rogue Valley Times* (southern Oregon), and more. Get started at josephinelibrary.org/catalog/magazines-and-newspapers **Kanopy: Streaming with your library card**

Josephine Community Library now offers Kanopy, a streaming service available to library cardholders. With Kanopy, you can enjoy thousands of ad-free movies, documentaries, and TV shows—anytime, anywhere. Kanopy works on your computer, mobile device, or smart TV, making it easy to watch at home or on the go. Start streaming today using your library card barcode at josephinelibrary.kanopy.com.

Williams Library hours

Tuesday/Wednesday/Saturday, 1-6 pm
Friday, 11 am-6 pm

For more information about the Josephine Community Library Foundation or library building projects, visit jclfoundation.org or contact Executive Director Rebecca Stoltz at rstoltz@josephinelibrary.org or 541-476-0571 ext. 200.

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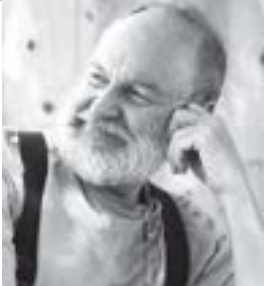
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THE STARRY SIDE

Take a trip across the north sky this autumn

BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells.

What I want to do in my column today is to take you on a journey across the night sky. Here we go!

So, looking north, we find the “W” of Cassiopeia almost perfectly upright. She can help us find Polaris, the North Star. Find the wider of the two “V’s” and divide it with your mind’s eye into thirds, using two lines that start from the bottom point of the V. Now follow the line next to the outside line, and it’ll take you to the North Star!

Now notice Cassiopeia’s husband, Cepheus, to her upper left, a bit above Polaris. He is a large, angled square connected to a triangle of three bright stars. The square and triangle make the shape of a house, pointing downish.

Overhead is the Summer Triangle, a bright threesome of stars, each of which is part of its own constellation. The lowest star is Deneb, which is also the star at the top of the Northern Cross.

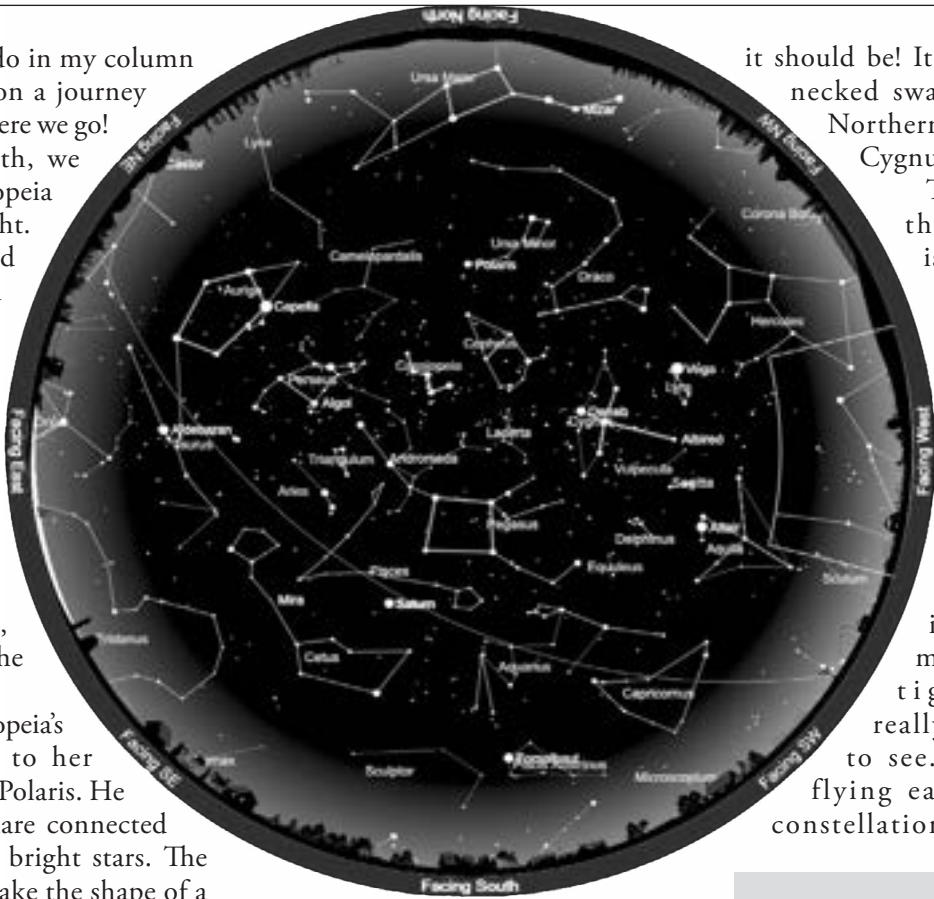


Image: Sky & Telescope (skyandtelescope.org).

Deneb and three other stars make the pole of the cross, with a star on either side forming the crosspiece, just where

it should be! It’s also a perfect long-necked swan! (This is why the Northern Cross is also called Cygnus, the Swan.)

The brightest star of the Summer Triangle is just to the west of the cross, and that’s Vega. Vega is a star in the constellation Lyra, an amazing two/two/two of stars very close to each other!

The third bright star in the Summer Triangle is Altair. She’s the middle star of a tight threesome, really cool, and so easy to see. Altair (Arabic for flying eagle) is part of the constellation Aquila the Eagle.

So there you go, we’ve made it across the sky from the North Star to the Summer Triangle. We’ve seen some great constellations along the way! But there are two little constellations we haven’t observed yet, tucked close to Altair. One is a little arrow: a tiny triangle at one end and two more stars making an arrow that points east. It’s small but obvious. East of the arrow is Delphinus the Dolphin. Four stars make a diamond-shaped body, with a more distant star as the tail. This is actually one of my all-time favorites!

Because all the stars (except for the North Star) are constantly moving, these constellations and stars we have been observing will be in the same position in exactly a year. You’ll notice all the stars except Polaris moving west, slowly but steadily, until next year when they will be in the same place as they are today.

Greeley Wells
greeley@greeley.me

— OF NOTE —

- Mercury is visible at dusk in September and October.
- Venus is up in the evening, rising in October at dusk.
- Jupiter and Mars are present in the mornings of September and October.

Thank you, Applegate Valley

BY ELISE HIGLEY

The last of our crew at Oshala Farm was clocking out for the day when a loud “poof” caught everyone’s attention. Looking up, we could already see white smoke curling from the barn’s clearstory. Within seconds, it was replaced by flame.

It’s hard to believe how difficult it is to dial 911 in a moment like that. 9112. 912. 9111. Finally: “We have a serious fire on our hands, a massive structure fire on a large barn. Send everyone you can.”

We’d later learn, confirmed independently by the state fire marshal’s team and our insurance company’s investigator, that the fire was accidental, sparked by an extension cord plugged into a scale. A piece of equipment we’d used a thousand times, on a day like any other.

We had 12 fire extinguishers mounted to that building. It didn’t

matter. The speed and ferocity of the fire were beyond anything we could fight with what we had on hand. Crew members ran to move tractors and forklifts parked alongside the barn. Others sprinted to isolate the irrigation lines so we could put 100 percent of our water where it counted. We laid handline, brought in the big irrigation cannons, and did everything we could to hold the flames back. The heat was unlike anything any of us had ever felt.

It felt like forever, but firefighters arrived within seven minutes of our call. Applegate Fire led the response, joined quickly by Williams Fire and crews from around the region. They faced flames reaching 60 feet into the air and deployed anyway. Neighboring buildings began to catch, not from flame, but from radiant heat alone. They fought through a gauntlet most people never have to think about: power poles

catching fire and dropping live lines between firefighters and the buildings, propane tanks near the forklifts and our employee lunch area heating past their limit and exploding, throwing flame onto additional structures.

Finally, the fire reached our fuel tanks, sending what looked like a 100-foot flamethrower into the sky as it burned through them. When the old pine trees at the edge of our property caught fire, we started to really fear it would spread to our neighbors. It was extreme fire season: hot, dry, windy, our normal afternoon breeze fueling the flames like a blow dryer.

One of the first to arrive wasn’t a firefighter at all. A few guys from Anderson Rock & Dirt happened to be driving by with a water trailer hitched to their truck, and they used whatever means they had at hand—hose from our well water at first, until the power cut off our well and irrigation pump—then kept fighting with fire extinguishers, saving our old barn again and again as

its eaves caught fire and sent flame into the shake roof underneath the metal. They fought until there was nothing left to fight, and then, just as fast as they’d appeared, they were gone. Heroes, through and through.

Somewhere in the middle of it, sprinting around trying to help with whatever I could, I started seeing my neighbors’ faces. Word had spread, and people dropped everything and came. By the time the flames were out and the ashes were smoldering, the community was already showing up in ways we couldn’t have imagined.

We had a crew to attend to. Many of our team have worked with us for more than a decade, and dozens of families depend on this work for their mortgage, their rent, food on the table. That morning, looking into the fear on our staff’s faces, Jeff and I faced one of the hardest moments of our lives, wishing we could promise them it would be okay when we hadn’t even

See OSHALA THANK YOU, page 19.

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GARDENING FROM THE HEART

Five reasons not to plant a fall garden

BY NOEL RUIZ

I don't plant a fall garden. This is *not* lazy gardening. I like to garden smarter, not harder. I love to garden more intuitively, less know-fully. I strive to garden more naturally, less dominantly.

Well, if you *are* feeling lazy about planting a fall garden—okay, you'll definitely get something out of this!

Here are five reasons not to plant a fall garden:

1. Encourage volunteers

Instead of planting a fall garden, I prefer my garden to plant itself. I encourage food plants that reseed easily and reliably.

These plants flower and drop seeds in time for self-sowing a fall crop. I often participate and encourage



Seed stalks from a mother kale plant were pruned and tossed to the side, and this patch of volunteer kale resulted. Photo by Noel Ruiz.

re-seeding by shaking dry seed heads around my garden, offering well-wishes.

Many annual and biennial greens and herbs are adapted to this pattern. Let these plants make seeds, and you'll likely find some volunteering come fall.

Some fall greens and herbs that reseed readily are kale, mustard, Swiss chard, radishes, lettuce, fennel, parsley, dill and celery.

2. Don't sweat the storage crops

I don't try to get multiple successions of storage crops like carrots and beets. Instead, I sow one planting of storage crops in late spring or early summer. I don't sweat sowing time because they have all season to get big.

With plants like carrots, beets, and leeks, I sow extra seeds close together and thin-to-eat the smaller and more damaged plants throughout the summer. We get to eat more come fall, saving the best for winter.

Bonus crops: I allow favored weeds to grow between our storage crops. Most garden weeds are food too. When they start crowding our storage crop seedlings, I harvest the weeds. I like to freeze some for winter eating as well. Those weeds often include mineral-rich summer greens like amaranth, lambsquarters, and purslane.

3. Focus on summer harvests

Late summer is an ideal time to sow many fall crops. This coincides with the time when abundant harvests from spring-planted crops and perennials start rolling in.

Come late summer, I'm less excited about starting and babying new seedlings. I'm already focusing my energy on veggie,

berry, fruit, flower, and seed harvests! We're also processing and putting away food for the winter.

I'm happy *not* to take on more gardening tasks in late summer. I'm appreciating the abundance from generous perennial foods and what we sowed in the spring.

4. Allow beds to go fallow

Some crops are completely harvested and done by late summer. Peas, fava beans, lettuce, radishes, and overwintered grains come to mind. Their early completion opens up space for new fall crops, should I want to plant them.

Sometimes it's more satisfying to let a bed go fallow and rest, knowing that it's okay if the garden is not always super-optimized.

This may result in conserving water if irrigation is no longer needed in that bed. Or if the space continues to be irrigated, a cover crop could be planted for improving soil. Personally, my favorite cover crops are the ones nature plants: weeds and volunteers!

5. Don't fight the conditions

Our climate is super hot in late summer. Tending delicate seedlings is *way* more challenging when the soil dries out fast. Sowing time and seedling care have to be spot-on.

I love challenges, but planting fall gardens isn't one that I choose. I'm already taking on other challenges, like



A volunteer patch of Swiss chard featuring plants in all stages of life: seedlings, youngsters, mature first-year-olds, and second-year-olds in flower. Photo by Noel Ruiz.

tending a young food forest and helping put up food and herbal medicines.

As mentioned earlier, I also *love* to see which weeds and volunteers thrive in these challenging conditions!

Full circle

This brings me to the joys of learning from a garden. Gardens always model natural rhythms. I also get to learn about myself as a human. (Wow—so much to learn!)

You might love planting a fall garden and the rewards it can offer. Many gardeners do! But I choose a different path. We always have the option to diverge from other gardeners' advice.

Just as no two people are the same, I appreciate gardens that look and feel different too. Let's let our personalities shine through our gardens!

Noel Ruiz

hello@homesteadculture.com

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

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Funding for the Rogue Flavor Showcase was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of USDA.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, TICKETS & VENDOR INFORMATION AT:
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Growing tomorrow’s earth stewards at Pacifica

BY VANESSA REDDING

The future of our planet depends on children who know it, love it, and understand how to care for it. At Pacifica: A Garden in the Siskiyou, we believe children develop that connection by climbing over logs, catching fish, exploring creeks, watching birds, creating with their hands, and discovering the wonder of nature for themselves.

This past summer was a beautiful reminder of what happens when children are given the opportunity to learn outdoors. It was also a season of generosity, exciting projects, and meaningful progress for Pacifica.

Over the summer, Pacifica hosted seven camps, welcoming more than 50 students for engineering, creativity, science, art, and outdoor adventure. Thanks to a generous donation from the Siskiyou Audubon Society, we awarded more than \$600 in camp scholarships. Audubon members Lee Webb and Frances Taylor taught students about local birds and their nests before helping them build birdhouses.



Construction for Pacifica classroom space, makerspace, and nature center. Photo by Vanessa Redding.

Twice this summer, Pacifica welcomed the Boys & Girls Club for fishing adventures. More than 20 students caught their first fish. After each first catch, instructor Tyler Ravencroft asked, “Do you want to kiss the fish?” Some students bravely did, while others laughed, “No way!” It’s a memory they’ll never forget.

Community generosity continued as Sisters on the Fly chose Pacifica as the host site for their annual Northwest Gathering. More than 150 women gathered at Pacifica and raised more than \$15,000 to support Pacifica’s mission. We are deeply grateful for their generosity and especially thank Anita Yager, Oregon’s Wrangler for Sisters on the Fly, whose leadership and volunteer hours made the gathering possible.

Another meaningful gift came from the P.E.O. Sisterhood, who purchased children’s raincoats for Pacifica’s outdoor programs, helping more children stay warm and dry as they enjoyed learning outdoors. Pacifica is still working to build a complete collection, especially in larger sizes. A donation of just \$35 provides one raincoat for a child. To help, email education@pacificagarden.org to purchase and ship a raincoat directly to Pacifica, or donate through our website and note “Child’s Raincoat” with your gift.

Visitors to Pacifica’s Natural Playground will discover the new two-story Wish Tree. Come

add your name, a wish, or a dream to a colorful fabric leaf and fasten it to the branches. As more leaves are added, the Wish Tree will grow as a colorful display of the hopes, dreams, and memories of those who visit.

This fall, through a generous donation, Pacifica will install 19 championship-level disc golf baskets, replacing the course’s totem pole targets. This exciting upgrade will create a more professional playing experience for players of all skill levels. We look forward to celebrating with a grand opening disc golf tournament next spring.

Perhaps the most exciting news of all is Pacifica’s newest chapter. Three new buildings are being installed to provide dedicated classroom space, a makerspace, and a Nature Center. For 26 years, Pacifica has shared every available indoor space, with the Great Hall and even the office serving as classrooms. The project is being completed in phases. Phase One—purchasing the buildings, moving them to Pacifica, and securing permits—is complete. Phase Two—installing the buildings—is underway, while Phase Three will complete ADA-accessible ramps, interior finishes, classroom furnishings, makerspace equipment, and learning spaces for students. It takes a community to build a community space. Join us in bringing these new learning spaces to life. To help, donate through Pacifica’s website and note “Classroom/Nature Center” with your gift.

The excitement continues inside these new learning spaces. This fall, Envision and Siskiyou Roots are partnering with Pacifica to launch a new three-day-per-week academic enrichment program. Students will experience science, history, language



Merik Gillispie at Pacifica’s Engineering Summer Camp. Photo by Vanessa Redding.

arts, and math across Pacifica’s 420 acres—exploring forests and creeks; creating in studios for art, ceramics, and woodworking; conducting scientific investigations; and working on hands-on projects. They will enjoy outdoor adventure, creativity, friendship, and real-world learning rarely found in a traditional classroom. Learn more at pacificagarden.org/education/community-workshop-classes.

As Pacifica continues to grow, so do the opportunities for children and families. Every project reflects Pacifica’s commitment to curiosity, creativity, stewardship, and lifelong learning. Together, we’re creating a place where people don’t just learn about the natural world—they build a connection to it.

Vanessa Redding
vanessa@pacificagarden.org

Celebrate the Applegate at the Jacksaphine Count(r)y Fair

BY MEGAN FEHRMAN

September in the Applegate means it’s time once again for the Jacksaphine Count(r)y Fair—the festival that celebrates the bounty and beauty of the Applegate Valley. This week-long series of events promises to be better than ever as A Greater Applegate and our partners prepare for 15 individual events throughout the Applegate Valley from September 19-27.

Residents and visitors alike are invited to wander through our valley while enjoying the food, beverages, art, music, and scenic venues and vistas (among other things) that the Applegate is known for. For full event details, visit agreaterapplegate.org, but here’s a quick rundown on all the ways Applegaters can engage and invest locally, while also having some fun close to home.

This year’s fair kicks off with Moulin Ruch: A Festival of Flight at LongSword Vineyard on **Saturday, September 19**. Inspired by France’s legendary Coupe Icare, this event celebrates the magic of flight with costumed paraglider and hang glider landings, kite-flying, birds-of-prey, model airplane crafts and contests, plus a family-friendly cabaret performance, live music, crepes, drinks, and community fun!

Sunday, September 20, is officially “Sunday Funday!” with several guided hikes and other activities happening across the valley. This includes a choose-your-own hiking adventure with several options available: you can join the Siskiyou Uplands Trails Association at the Wolf Gap Trailhead and hike to

the Siskiyou Viewpoint, or ramble on the Pipe Fork Trail with the Williams Community Forest Project, or dare to climb Bolt Mountain with Diana Coogle, the Applegate’s most famous hiker. If hiking isn’t your thing, participate in a family-friendly scavenger hunt at Provolt Recreation Site, listen to some “Poetry for the Planet” and sip a glass of wine at Red Lily, or throw some disc golf at Pacifica. The Applegate is your oyster!

On **Monday, September 21**, we are thrilled to sponsor a pepper roast at the Williams Farmers’ Market and to show some other fruit as well: the fruit of two years’ worth of labor that has established the Williams Resilience Hub between the Sugarloaf Community Association, the Williams Library, and the Grange. Come out for the peppers and then visit with the folks who have worked so hard to learn radio communication and emergency preparedness in order to be able to support our community should the need arise.

Wednesday, September 23, takes us to “downtown” Applegate to enjoy the weekly Applegate Evening Market, full of fresh farm food, beautiful crafts, food trucks, and live music from Wolf Jett, a groovy five-piece band that combines folk, soul, and Americana into “Psychedelic Southern Rock.” They will be followed by No Ordinary Love at Apple Outlaw.

If you are also craving some funky beats, head out to Blue Fox Farm, aka the Good Factory, on **Friday night the 25th** for a dance party featuring hip-hop,

reggae, and some soulful World Sounds being thrown down on the farm!

The final weekend of the fair includes events at both the Upper Applegate and Williams granges on **Saturday, September 26**, and the third annual Art in the Vineyard at Wooldridge Creek Winery on **Sunday, September 27**. Let’s celebrate and support these two important community institutions (and eat some pies!) before heading out for a relaxing Sunday with the Applegate Artists. There will be live music by the Rosa Lees, local art for sale, pizzas from The Haul, and libations! The vineyard property will be filled with artists of all mediums. Spend your dollars supporting

local artists and find something unique to take home as a souvenir from the Jacksaphine Count(r)y Fair.

This festive fundraiser helps to sustain A Greater Applegate’s community-building work, directly supporting our operational costs and programs. Our mission is to build local connections, strengthen rural resilience, support community-led action, and promote the economic and cultural vitality of the Applegate Valley. Through our active working groups and networks, we are addressing local food



and farm systems, outdoor recreation, the arts, destination management, communications, forest and fire issues, emergency preparedness, and more, as highlighted by events throughout the Jacksaphine Count(r)y Fair. Please be sure to check the community calendar on applegateconnect.org and agreaterapplegate.org for a complete schedule and event details—then come on out and jump in! There is truly something for everyone.

Megan Fehrman
megan@agreaterapplegate.org

INTRODUCING...

Steve and Cheri Root

BY DIANA COOGLE

Thirteen years ago, Steve and Cheri Root moved to the Applegate to start a church, the Upper Applegate Church, with services at their ranch on Upper Applegate Road. But the story of their association with the Applegate starts long before that.

It starts with Cheri’s grandfather, Dave Winningham, who, in 1930, bought the land where the Roots live now and established the ranch there. Cheri grew up in the Applegate. Steve grew up in Klamath Falls and moved to the Applegate as a senior in high school. Steve and Cheri met in youth activities at the Ruch Community Church and fell in love. Steve, who is passionate about “anything in the outdoors and in the mountains—fishing, hunting, camping”—always knew

he wanted to marry a “mountain woman.” Cheri, by her own acknowledgment, is a mountain woman.

Cheri’s father, however, was not thrilled that his high-school-age daughter was so in love, so he was relieved when Steve went to college in Pensacola, Florida, while Cheri stayed in Oregon for college. That, he thought, would end that.

It didn’t. Love won; the long-distance relationship continued apace. When Steve returned to the Applegate with his degree (major: theology; minor: world missions), he and Cheri got married in the Ruch Community Church, the same church where her parents were married—and where her daughter was married last summer.

After many years in Nevada, where they established a church, Steve and Cheri

moved back to Cheri’s grandfather’s ranch in the Applegate 13 years ago. They run a cow-calf operation there with 100 head of cattle.

They could see the need for a church in the area. There used to be a church at McKee Bridge, which later moved to the Grange Hall. When the hall burned, the church was moved to Cheri’s grandmother’s house on the ranch.

Many years ago there was a church on Palmer Creek and another just below Copper, before the dam went in.

Sensing a church vacuum, Steve and Cheri started the Upper Applegate Church, holding services on their ranch, just as her grandparents had done.

As pastor, Steve sees his main calling as “ministering to the soul and spirit of people in the Applegate.”

“These are beautiful people in the Upper Applegate,” he says, praising them for the new spirit he



Pastor Steve Root with his wife, Cheri Root.

senses in the community. He ministers to them, he says, through a Biblical perspective—through “God’s wisdom and understanding.”

Another important function of the Upper Applegate Church is as a social gathering. Steve senses in people “the need, hunger, and longing for something different” and feels his church can

See STEVE AND CHERI ROOT, page 19.

Reminisce and learn about the Barter Fair

BY LAURA AHEARN AND JESSIE SPERO

Forty-eight years ago, in October of 1978, Al Venet invited around 150 neighbors to his organic seed farm on Tetherow Road, in Williams, to trade their harvest bounty and build community. Word got out. Within six years, what had become an annual fair with music and booths attracted a thousand participants. The event moved to the historic 140-acre Buckley farm in Ruch. Enthusiasm and attendance skyrocketed. By 1990, over 2,000 people attended the fair. In 1995,

the headcount exceeded 10,000. Jackson County’s Commissioners imposed new fees, and the sheriff threatened arrests. A federal civil rights lawsuit against the county followed. The county lost, but the fair had been squelched.

Not surprisingly, Applegate residents, outside visitors, and government officials held a variety of views about the Barter Fair. If you lived here in 1978-95, you may have memories or opinions to share, as well as questions to ask. If you have moved to the

Applegate Valley within the last 30 years and don’t know about this quirky part of our history, it is a fascinating story for you to explore. That is why everyone is invited to the Barter Fair Reunion at the Williams Grange Hall on Saturday, October 10. Here is the schedule:

1-4 pm: Enjoy tea and fruit while viewing displays. Bring your memorabilia and photographs to share. All donated items will be forwarded to the Southern Oregon Historical Society (SOHS). There will also be a booth to record recollections and observations.

2 pm: Talking circle.

4 pm: The Corn Dance. Don’t know what this means? That is an excellent reason to come and learn.

5 pm: Potluck dinner.
6-8 pm: Music, more memories, and more fun.

Volunteers are needed. Please contact BarterFairReunion@gmail.com if you can help or have questions or suggestions.

On October 7 (Medford Library) and 14 (Ashland Library), at noon on both days, Jessie Spero, Maya Reames, and Michele Scherer will present the story of the Barter Fair as part of the Windows in Time series hosted by SOHS and the Jackson County Library System. Plan to attend!

Laura Ahearn
laura.ahearn@stanfordalumni.org
Jessie Spero
sperojessie@gmail.com

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OPINION

BLM wants to increase logging on our timber lands

BY CHERYL BRUNER

On February 19, 2026, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued a Notice of Intent to increase timber production back to the logging levels of the 1970s and '80s. In a BLM press release, Acting Director Bill Groffy declared this move “essential for reviving local economies and reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires.”

Timber production levels of the '70s and '80s were based on the 1937 O&C Act, which required BLM to manage former railroad-grant lands in Oregon and California (O&C) “for permanent forest production, sustained-yield timber harvesting, watershed protection, and economic stability for local counties.” Historically, the annual cut was set at 500 million board feet. From 1960 through 1989, the cut exceeded that figure, as O&C lands produced an annual average of 1 billion board feet (“O&C Lands in Brief,” congress.gov).

In 2025, that figure had dropped to 250 million (BLM press release, Dec. 15, 2025, blm.gov).

Recognition of ecological values was minimal in 1937, so it's not surprising that the O&C Act did not consider them. But by the 1990s the ecological harm of logging was apparent: species decline, soil degradation, damaged water quality and quantity, loss of flood control, and reduction of fish and wildlife populations and of the biological diversity needed to sustain forests. Consequently, timber production declined.

It would be economically and ecologically detrimental to return to the former level of cut. Our trees have more value than the income they bring in at the mill or to the O&C counties. All Oregonians suffer if we lose the ecosystem services that trees provide. In a congressional testimony, Ernie Niemi, a Senior Economist with ECONorthwest,

lists 16 “goods and services” derived from federal forests, including production and regulation of water, atmosphere, and climate; regulation of nutrients and pollution; formation and retention of soil; habitat for economically important fish and wildlife and for birds and microorganisms that control pests and diseases; production of genetic and medicinal resources; carbon retention; and recreational and aesthetic resources that also influence the economic wellbeing of the community.

Niemi's argument is that timber is not the only value found in our federal forests, that these forests generate jobs and income in different ways, and that the trees serve the community as living beings.

A second argument against BLM's proposal is that the stated goal of reducing wildfire is not justified by science. A BLM-funded 2018 study at Oregon State University found that “intensive plantation forestry characterized by young forests and spatially homogenized fuels... [was a] significant driver of wildfire severity,” and that the “historical and current forest management practices for timber production contribute more to increased wildfire risk” (co-author Christopher Dunn, quoted in “High wildfire severity risk,” news.oregonstateuniversity.edu).

Mature forests, as opposed to early seral forests, form canopies of multi-layered foliage that trap moisture and cool the forest, even in summer drought. Mature trees, with fire-resistant bark, serve as natural firebreaks.

We do not want to return to antiquated methods of forest management. We need to manage our forests for our wellbeing and safety.

Insanity is the repetition of management that does not work.

Cheryl Bruner
Williamscommunityforestproject.org
Williams, Oregon

Applegate Partnership helps BLM's damaging logging with a letter to the court

BY MEADOWSWEET LEVI

I was extremely disappointed in the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council's (APWC) decision in April to send a letter to the court in support of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) logging in their Apple Saws, Holcomb Hollow, and Thom Bone Timber Sales that are part of BLM's SOS logging project. The APWC sent the letter in support of the logging to the United States District Court, in response to the lawsuit and request for injunction that our local environmental group, Applegate Siskiyou Alliance (ASA), has filed against the BLM and these damaging logging projects.

ASA filed the lawsuit in March, and APWC sent their letter to the judge in support of the logging only a month later, extolling the virtues of the BLM logging recently implemented above Ruch.

At that time, most of the APWC board members had never been into the logged units of the Apple Saws or Holcomb Hollow timber sales to see the clearcuts, deep yarding scars, extensive logging of oak and madrone, torn-up earth, bulldozing through riparian areas, and the logging of green, living, and healthy Douglas fir trees. Many of the APWC board members also did not know that this letter in support of the logging was being sent to the court, and they did not support it.

This has caused a lot of controversy in the Applegate, as many are mystified that an organization that has a mission statement which reads, “Promoting

ecological, economic and community well-being in the Applegate watershed through on-the-ground projects and strategic collaborations,” could be so calloused to the ecological and social harm these BLM logging projects are doing.

In their letter to the court, the APWC states, “We do not render any opinion herein about how the Apple Saws timber harvest has been implemented,” but they do, in fact, render an opinion when they send a letter in support of the logging to the court.

I was appalled because I know firsthand what damage this logging is creating because the BLM's timber sale purchaser, Estremado Logging Company, is destroying the view from my house in Ruch, and I watch the logging progressing daily, and it is very upsetting to see the forests destroyed right in front of me. These were beautiful, green forests that have been turned into logged-over and damaged landscapes before my eyes.

This is a real-world, personal impact, akin to many of my neighbors who have had to witness the atrocities of the logging next to their houses this spring and summer on Ben Johnson Mountain, and who now have massive slash piles right next to their houses that could explode in a wildfire. BLM has increased the fire risks next to homes in Ruch with this irresponsible logging.

Save Applegate Forests for Everyone!
Meadowsweet Levi
meadowsweetseed@yahoo.com

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

Ruch Holiday Market moves to the Upper Applegate Grange

BY ALLIE PARKIN

Over the last two years, I've spent a lot of time at our local Grange hall, and after going back and forth about it, I've decided to move the Ruch Holiday Market there this year.

I know many folks have gotten used to the market being at the fire department—the building is such a great space, and the fire crew has been wonderful to us. Still, I'm excited about the change in venue. While the space is a bit different from what we're used to, I think the Grange will bring a lot of freedom and new opportunities for this event.

I'm looking forward to putting the stage to use during the market and am looking for musicians to play throughout the day—please reach out if you're interested! You may also send me an email if you'd like to sell your handmade wares at this event, and I will hook you up with a vendor application. I plan to have everyone lined up and confirmed by October 1.

We hope you'll scoot on up to the Upper Applegate Grange

this November 28 and 29 for our 7th Annual Ruch Holiday Market!

Allie Parkin
upperapplegategrange@gmail.com
www.upperapplegategrange.com



Upper Applegate Grange upcoming events and happenings

BY ALLIE PARKIN

We are gearing up for a few months of activities at the Upper Applegate Grange. By the time this article makes its way to your mailbox, our 2nd Anniversary Celebration will already be done and over. This year we chose to host an open mic night with a \$10 taco bar to mark the occasion.

We hope you'll join us for the next event: our second annual Harvest Festival during Jacksaphine Count(r) y Fair week on Saturday, September 26, from 1-5 pm. We'll have local vendors, live music from members of the Southern Oregon Songwriters Association, a pie auction, and our homemade smoker puffing away to fill your bellies with good food.

October brings the apple harvest, which we'll celebrate by hosting the Grange Apple Jam and Chili Cook-Off. The apple press will be squeezing juice from 11 am-4 pm, so make sure to bring your bounty (pro tip: bring your apples already quartered) and take home some fresh-squeezed apple juice (in your own jugs, of course). We will

also have pressed apple juice for sale, as well as several apple-licious treats. Sign-ups for the chili cook-off will come out in September—keep an eye on our Facebook page and emails for that link. We are looking for musicians for this event as well, so please reach out if that is you!

We are thrilled to report that the Ruch Holiday Market has decided to host its seventh annual market here at the Grange! The market is rich with local artisan vendors, good food, live music, and community vibes. If you're interested in vending at that event or playing music, please shoot me an email at squirrel.medicine.pottery@gmail.com.

We'll wrap up the year of events on Saturday, December 5, with a Holiday Bingo Night. Wear your festive sweater, bring cash and your appetite, and get ready to win! We hope to see you at the Grange!

Allie Parkin
upperapplegategrange@gmail.com
www.upperapplegategrange.com

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE LAND

There’s more than meets the eye

BY GAY BRADSHAW

*You can’t hear me sighing
Or see my heart a crying
You can’t know
‘Cause it don’t show on me.*

*Abuse, unuse, refuse, misuse
That I got from you
But you can’t know the feeling
‘Cause it just don’t show on me*

*You can’t know the heartbreak
And you can’t feel the heartache
You can’t know
‘Cause it don’t show on me.*

—Buck Owens, It Don’t Show On Me

The old expression, “You can’t tell a book by its cover,” was proven true by a group of US and Swedish biologists. Researchers were worried about the psychological and physiological effects on Bears from intense, unrestrained human interaction by ATV users, mountain bikers, hikers, hunters, and, more recently, drones. At any time and virtually any place, humans intrude on Bear privacy and activities that are core to their survival—the search for food, ablutions, courting, denning, and care for young. Scientists wanted to assess what levels of fear and

anxiety Bears might be experiencing. In Bears, as in Humans, chronic fear and anxiety lead to chronic stress, which in turn compromises immunity and psychological health and creates intra-specific tension and a suite of other potential maladies. Over time, stress in Humans and Bears leads to severe psychological and physical harm. To assess internal states of well-being and stress effects, doctors and scientists commonly use cardiac measures of heart rate and heart rate variability. Biologists fit collars on Bears for this purpose.

At first, the biologists didn’t notice much behavior change when the Bears heard and saw drones. Most Bears appeared unaffected. But data from the cardiac monitors showed otherwise. “You can’t tell a book by its cover”: what was happening inside the Bears told a completely different story. All of the Bears, even one denning for hibernation, showed off-the-chart heart rates, doubling when drones were sighted and heard overhead. The heart rate for a mother Bear with cubs jumped from 41 to 162 beats per minute. Recovery from the spike of stress was slow. One Bear took more than three hours before his heart rate fell back to normal. On the outside, Bears seemed nonplussed, but inside,



Photo by Charlie Russell.

psychophysiologically, they were stressed to the max. This is an important message.

While the mountains and wilderness may be relaxing and an antidote to our own human stress, it isn’t for the Animals who live there. Charlie Russell, who lived with Grizzly Bears all of his seven-plus decades, put it this way: “When we stride off hiking, biking and hunting, it may feel good to us, but for a Bear it’s like a stranger bursts right in our living room and we have no idea what they plan to do, including if they plan to kill us.” Given the precarious state of all Wildlife, and the further stress

of fires, it’s time to prioritize Animals’ well-being over our own and feel content knowing that our restraint is helping Bears live in the peace and harmony of Nature that we love so much.

G.A. Bradshaw
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Editor’s note: The author feels that all animal and nature capitalizations are integral to the spirit of her writing. We have respected her stylistic choice and retained these capitalizations throughout the piece.

Welcoming elk back to the Applegate

BY SUZIE SAVOIE

Elk are making a big comeback in the Applegate, and many people are welcoming their return, enjoying seeing them in the backcountry, in their fields, or on their land.

It is estimated that nearly 10 million elk lived in North America prior to 1500. This number fell to less than 100,000 by 1907. This massive reduction, down to one percent of the historic numbers, included all elk subspecies in the United States at the time. Two elk subspecies were fully extirpated.

Roosevelt elk (*Cervus canadensis roosevelti*), named for President Theodore Roosevelt, is the local subspecies we have here in the Applegate. Its current range includes the Pacific Northwest, primarily in Washington, Oregon, northern California, and British Columbia.

By the end of the 19th century, most of the Roosevelt elk in Oregon were eliminated by overhunting. The elk around Fort Clatsop, believed to be some of the last herds remaining, were used to reestablish populations in other areas of western Oregon, primarily along the coast and in the Cascades.

Roosevelt elk are thought to have been extirpated from southwest Oregon and the Applegate Valley by the late 1880s to the 1890s, due to unrestricted commercial hunting and excessive settler harvest.

Elk are a keystone species that serve an important ecological role in local ecosystems, and they are culturally significant to local Tribes.

Beginning in 1985, six Roosevelt elk from Redwood National Park were reintroduced into Elk Creek, a



Elk in a high mountain meadow in the Applegate Watershed. Photo by Luke Ruediger.

tributary of the Klamath River, by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Klamath National Forest with the support of Karuk tribal community members. Several were also reintroduced a few miles north of Somes Bar. Reintroductions continued in the Klamath River area, and it is estimated that by 1996, 232 Roosevelt elk had been reintroduced into Klamath National Forest and the Marble Mountain Wilderness. These initial elk reintroductions on the Klamath have allowed elk populations to grow and expand beyond the Klamath River area and into southern Oregon and the Applegate Valley. Hunting permits have been very restricted through a lottery system in order to allow the elk to reinhabit their former range.

This all sounds like a happy success story up to this point,

with a lot to applaud thanks to the reintroduction efforts of wildlife managers. The big hurdle for Applegate elk to fully reinhabit their former range, however, is that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has designated the Applegate Wildlife Management Unit (Unit 28), as an “Elk De-emphasis Area.” Oregon wildlife managers have state mandates to purposefully limit the number of elk in Unit 28, which includes the entire Applegate River Watershed on the Oregon side of the border, as well as part of the upper Illinois River Watershed.

The Applegate is designated as an elk de-emphasis area because ODFW wants to keep elk numbers low to prevent property and agricultural damage on private lands and because

the unit primarily focuses its big-game management on Columbia blacktail deer. De-emphasis areas do not have standard fixed population management objectives for growing the local herd size. Out of the 68 Wildlife Management Units (WMU) in Oregon, only five are elk de-emphasis areas. In these areas, there are more liberal hunting rules to control the number of elk and reduce agricultural conflicts rather than grow a trophy herd for hunters, and the ecological importance of elk is not really considered at all.

ODFW adopted formal elk management objectives and zone classifications following the initial statewide Elk Management Plan finalized in 1992. At the time, there was pressure from agricultural interests, including orchards and vineyards, that were worried about elk conflicts as the elk reinhabited their former winter range in the valleys of southwest Oregon.

Thirty-four years on, with elk now being spotted throughout various locations in the Applegate and with more knowledge about living harmoniously with large wildlife like elk, it is time to change the Applegate Wildlife Management Unit from a de-emphasis area to a management area so that elk can fully reinhabit their former range, from which they were extirpated nearly 150 years ago. If folks who live on the coast and in the Cascades can co-exist with elk, then so can the Applegate.

Suzie Savoie
klamathsiskiy@gmail.com

Your fire levy at work

BY LIZA CROSSE

What element of our Applegate community is out of sight, out of mind, yet is a matter of life and death, that happens once every five years but relates to your life every single day? The Applegate Fire District Levy!

Every five years, voters consider the question of renewing or changing the levy, a property assessment (tax) that is currently \$1.25 per thousand dollars of assessed value. We are now halfway through the current cycle, and it is time for an update about this indispensable tax.

Taxes? Boring and best avoided, right? Fire engines and emergency responders? Much more exciting and certainly necessary... yet we can't have one without the other. The levy funds 40 percent of the Applegate Fire District's budget, with the rest coming from the base property tax and grants. Without the levy, we would have no ability to hire firefighters—not even a full-time chief—so it is essential to our community.

Combined with our base tax, it supports a broad range of local emergency services.

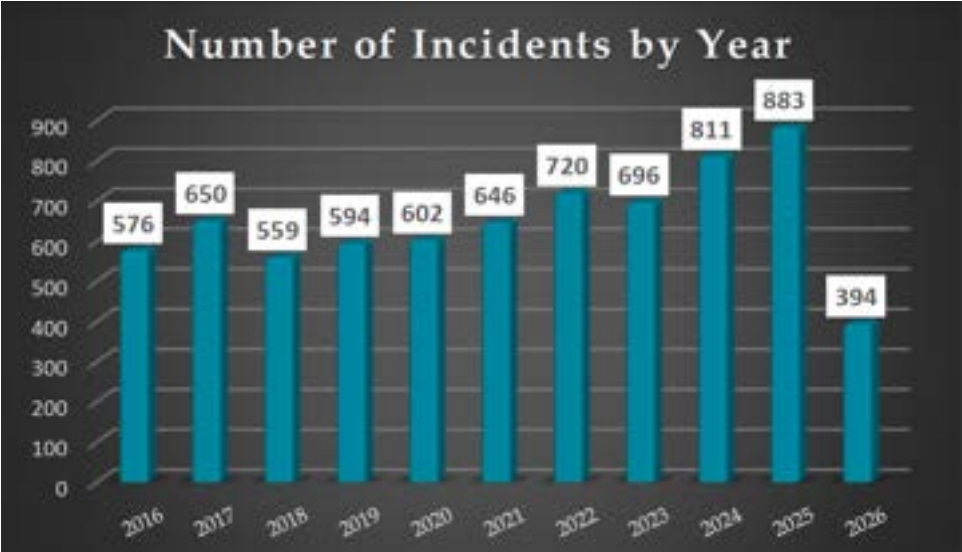
The District (as we call the Applegate Fire District) is outstanding at capitalizing on the resources it is given. Give them a dollar, and they make it three dollars, with matching grants and other resources garnered from the state and foundations, all to improve their service to the community. The levy funds the staff members who work to find additional resources.

Fire Chief Chris Wolfard recently reflected, "One of the things I'm proudest of is how much we've been able to accomplish with the community's investment. The levy has improved emergency response, expanded wildfire prevention, and helped us bring millions of additional grant dollars into the Applegate that otherwise would not have been available."

The levy renewal and increase in November 2023 was approved by 72 percent of voters and had three goals: (1) improving response times in the western

portion of the District by staffing Station 51 in Applegate, (2) matching an Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) grant to hire a Fire Marshal for five years and two firefighters for three years, and (3) renewing fire prevention efforts across the Applegate Valley. We are on track with these goals.

One of the most important benefits of the 2023 levy has been



staffing Station 51. Together, the levy and outside grant funding allowed the District to place firefighters closer to the western Applegate, reducing response times when every minute matters. Although the OSFM grant that funded year-round firefighters ended as planned, the levy continues to support seasonal and student firefighters. That means Station 51 will continue to be staffed during fire season while the District pursues additional funding opportunities.

Approximately 2.5 years of levy funding remains for the Fire Prevention and Fuels Coordinator position (formerly the Fire Marshal position), and recruitment is underway.

The levy has helped the District bring in additional grant funding from various sources for fire prevention. Those partnerships have provided a chipper, two dump trailers, two remote-controlled masticators, and two \$100,000 Title II grants supporting hazardous-fuels reduction projects in both the Jackson and Josephine County portions of the Applegate Valley. All of these projects are helping property owners reduce wildfire risk. Give the District a local dollar,

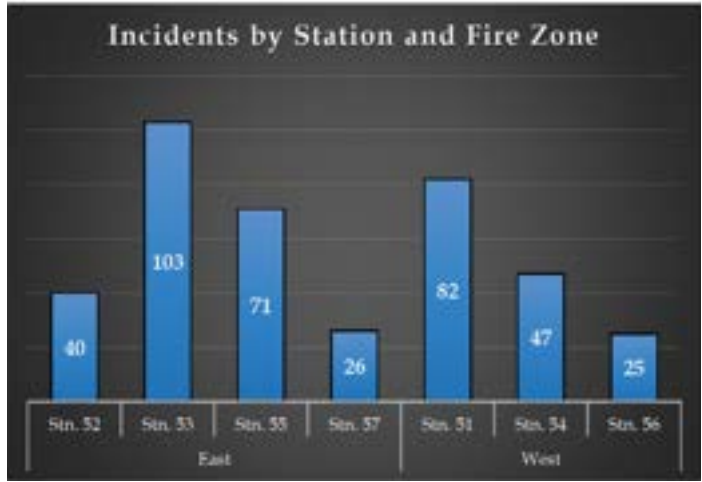
and it continues finding ways to turn it into much more for our community.

The levy has also helped replace aging apparatus, including two water tenders and two Type 1 engines. The District has also been able to invest in modern communications equipment, computers, and software, improving efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organization.

Demand for the services of Applegate Fire District is growing, with emergency calls increasing yearly (see graphs). The risk of wildfires is extreme. The next levy renewal is in 2028. The District will soon be conducting a new strategic plan to consider priorities. That in turn will lead to a community discussion about needs, what we can afford, and what the next levy should support. Is the current levy rate sufficient? Do we need to hire more staff or update stations? I encourage you to be engaged.

It is also important to note that the District staff and board cannot campaign for a renewed levy in 2028. That is up to us, the citizens of the Applegate Valley. Please join us!

Liza Crosse
Secretary, Friends of the Applegate
Fire District
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Note Stn. 53 is the Ruch Station; 51 is the Applegate Station. Other stations are unstaffed.

■ APPLEGATE SUMMER CAMP

Continued from page 5.

importance of outdoor play for youth. Time spent outdoors promotes healthy development by encouraging active play, facilitating social connections, and nurturing a sense of belonging in nature.

This year, the AOSC program served 44 campers, with an average of 17 campers per week. In a testament to the community's support of the program, most campers attended camp for more than one session. In fact, eight campers attended all six weeks. This time together

provided ample opportunity for campers to strengthen existing friendships, nurture new ones, and hone collaboration skills. Another avenue for growth and connection was our new Counselor-In-Training (CIT) Program. Over the course of the season, five CITs mentored campers while learning from experienced staff. This new element of the program expanded AOSC's reach while facilitating further connections across the community.

A vital factor in this program's success is the support of organizations

and community members across the Applegate. Thanks to donations from A Greater Applegate, Rooted In Hope, and several community members, one-third of campers attended AOSC with the support of a scholarship. AOSC was also supported by grants from the Pacific Power Foundation and Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District. The Teresa McCormick Center made a valuable contribution by donating snacks, which satisfied campers at the end of jam-packed days. Notably, Jackson County Parks

was generous in allowing us to use their facilities. Finally, community members who promoted AOSC within their networks were instrumental in helping the program reach as many families as possible. We deeply appreciate the support of all mentioned and are excited to continue to serve the community next summer.

It is our hope that every camper was positively impacted by their AOSC experience.

Charlotte Hyde
charlotte@apwc.info

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THROUGH THE LEPIDOPTERAN LENS

Mormon metalmark: An unmistakable butterfly

BY LINDA KAPPEN

The Mormon metalmark, *Apodemia mormo*, belongs to a sixth butterfly family, Riodinidae (metalmarks).

The other five families are Hesperidae (skippers), Papilionidae (parnassians and swallowtails), Pieridae (whites, marbles and sulphurs), Lycaenidae (gossamer wings, with our subfamilies of coppers, hairstreaks and blues) and Nymphalidae (brushfoots).

Riodinidae has around 1,500 species in the Neotropics and about 30 genera in North America. A single species lives in our Pacific Northwest, and a single species is found in Europe. A few species of Riodinidae live in Africa and Asia. With all that being said, it is special to have a single species here in the Pacific Northwest.

The Mormon metalmark reaches a wingspan of 1.25 inches. When looking at the dorsal wing (or open wings), the upper dorsal wing (UDW) background colors range from russet orange to reddish brown to dark brown. On the foreground of the UDW, white spots form angled shapes and patterns with a soft touch of checked white fringes. The antennae are barred in black and white with black tips. The dorsal hind wing (DHW) has white patches against a dark brown background with hints of gray. When the Mormon metalmark perches in a ventral position, white spots stand out on a dark gray background.



Mormon metalmark on buckwheat. Photo by Linda Kappen.

Dry areas in the mountains, arid canyons, and flat areas serve as habitat for the Mormon metalmarks. They live in isolated populations and only travel 50 to 60 meters from their group of host plants. Host plants for the Mormon metalmark are buckwheats of the *Eriogonum* genus.

In the summer months, males appear before females; then the female seeks males on the host plants. Eggs are laid in clusters of up to four eggs. Larvae emerge from protected places during spring and continue feeding on the host plant. The adult's food is nectar from later summer blooms of composite flowers, such as senecio, rabbitbrush, asters, goldenrod, thistle, and any still-blooming

host plants. These butterflies can be seen in flight from late July to early October.

The ranges of the Mormon metalmark in our area of the Pacific Northwest are west of the Cascade Mountains in the Siskiyou and Klamath Mountains, Cascade Siskiyou National Monument, and other mountain ranges in the west to the north, south, and east toward Idaho. It is extraordinary to have one species of Riodinidae in our region.

Uncommon species like the Mormon metalmark also accentuate the importance of preserved lands, both private and public, such as national monuments and national parks. The diversity within these spaces provides undisturbed habitats for any

uncommon species living in isolated populations.

A fun fact is that the butterfly was named Mormon by a couple of scientists in 1859 who believed it had come from a Mormon region in Utah. The specimens at the time were actually collected in the nearby state of Nevada. Read more about this name chosen for the Mormon metalmark in the book *Butterflies of the Pacific Northwest* by Robert Michael Pyle and Caitlin C. LaBar.

Linda Kappen
humbukkapps@hotmail.com



Linda Kappen.



Mormon metalmark on rubber rabbitbrush. Photo by Linda Kappen

The Applegater board welcomes new member, Kat Gore

BY DIANA COOGLE

If you frequent the Applegate or Ruch libraries, you might know Kat Gore, who works there as a library associate with Jackson County Library Services (JCLS). And if you know Kat, you know how thrilled we are that she has joined the *Applegater* board of directors.

We are especially thrilled because Kat comes to us with a strong background

in journalism and with skills particularly suitable for her position on the board, as social media director.

After a childhood in Sonoma County, California, Kat majored in journalism at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where she wrote for the student newspaper, *Mustang News*. After graduating, she worked first in local journalism, then for ten years in marketing and public relations while

also doing freelance work in journalism, copywriting, and editing. While working as a marketer at Sonoma County Library, Kat decided to pursue a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree with the goal of working in a public library. She graduated with an MLIS from Valdosta State University in 2024.

Well before Kat and her husband, Garrett, moved to the Applegate with their dogs in 2022, they had been longtime Applegate visitors. Now, in addition to working as a library associate at JCLS, Kat is a freelance marketing consultant and a volunteer for A Greater Applegate's community email list.

Diana Coogle
diana@applegater.org



New board member, Kat Gore.

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THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAIN ADVOCATE

Let's not get stung by the Yellowjacket Project

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

In April 2025, Secretary of Agriculture Brook Rollins issued a Secretarial Memo aimed at increasing timber production on National Forest lands. This action placed over 112 million acres, approximately 58 percent of our National Forest lands, including all of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, under an “Emergency Situation Determination,” or ESD.

ESDs were intended to address urgent, sudden, or unforeseen threats to public safety or natural resources, but they are now being used to approve large logging projects on federal lands where no urgent threat exists. The intent is to fast-track timber extraction, bypass traditional environmental analysis, cut out public involvement opportunities, reduce transparency, eliminate standard public comment periods, eliminate objection processes, and expedite logging projects on public lands throughout the West, including the Applegate Valley.

Currently, National Forest Ranger Districts across the West are implementing increasingly large and damaging timber sales with increasingly little to no public involvement, little environmental analysis, and virtually no limits on the scope, scale, or intensity of logging that can be proposed under ESD timber sales.

Unfortunately, despite being designated an Adaptive Management Area (AMA) specifically for community-based collaboration, the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is proposing its first ESD timber sale in a very large portion of the Applegate River watershed. The timber sale, called the Yellowjacket Project, covers potentially thousands of acres of Applegate forests on the western face of Wagner Butte, at the headwaters of the Little Applegate River, on Glade Creek and Yale Creek, as well as on Teel Creek in the Upper Applegate River watershed, along Elliott Ridge and Yellowjacket

Ridge, and on the slopes of Acorn Woman Mountain above Acorn Woman Lake.

Sprawling across much of the eastern Applegate River watershed, the commercial logging proposed in this project has the potential to permanently damage the forests, scenic viewsheds, wildfire resilience, and habitat and watershed values of the region. Recent field monitoring has validated these concerns as we are finding mature, late-successional, and old-growth forests targeted for logging throughout the timber sale area. We are also seeing that many new, decommissioned, defunct, and/or long unused roads and skid trails would be developed to facilitate logging operations, many large trees would be logged, and, as we are seeing in local BLM timber sales, mature hardwood trees would be almost universally removed during felling and yarding operations.

With remote cameras, we have also documented the rare Pacific fisher in proposed logging units and have serious concerns that this logging would not only degrade habitat for species like the Pacific fisher that require mature forest habitats but would also increase fire risks. The removal of large-diameter trees is detrimental to habitat values and increases fire risk by removing the most resilient portions of the landscape, by altering microclimate conditions, and by creating hotter, drier, more windy landscapes colonized by a dense, highly flammable mix of logging slash, fine fuels, dry grass, shrub growth, bushy stump-sprouting hardwoods, and young conifers. Converting mature forests into young, dense growth is the opposite of fuel reduction and would increase fire risks on the landscape scale.

According to agency staff, this project could produce between seven and 14 large timber sales, depending on what is approved and what units are ultimately



A Pacific fisher documented on the western face of Wagner Butte within mature and old-growth forest habitat proposed for logging in unit 278 of the Yellowjacket Project.

moved forward into a final decision. This level of harvest, combined with the current BLM logging frenzy in the foothills of the Applegate, would permanently alter our beautiful watershed and dramatically increase fire risks in the mountains that surround our communities.

Currently, the Forest Service appears unsure about providing the public with adequate opportunity for commenting on the Yellowjacket Project. They are also saying the analysis for this massive, sprawling timber sale that includes much of the Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District will be capped at a paltry 15 pages, meaning virtually none of the relevant issues will be properly considered or analyzed in the upcoming Environmental Analysis.

The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is in the process of planning one of the largest Applegate Valley timber sales in many decades, and they are being pushed by the administration in DC to log off our public lands without properly considering the impacts or providing meaningful public involvement or public-comment opportunities. It's time for the public to push back and demand these lands be managed for both the public interest and future generations, rather than for short-term profits that leave our communities, watersheds, and forests less resilient, less vibrant, and less beautiful.

Luke Ruediger
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Applegaters adapt to living with the risk of wildfire

BY TRACY HARDING

Across southwestern Oregon, farmers and land managers are adapting to a way of life in which wildfire influences decisions throughout the year. In 2006, when Josh Cohen and his family moved onto their ten-acre farm in Applegate, Barking Moon Farm, concerns about fire safety led Josh to immediately replace the electrical wiring in the old house and barn. In his second year on the property, Josh accidentally started a seven-acre fire on a neighbor's property when a narrow turn of the push-behind mower he was using, winding in on the last pass, touched hot metal to the ground. Several fire units arrived quickly to put out the fire.

After that, Josh's thinking and planning about fire safety became more detailed and rigorous, covering practical protocols such as avoiding the use of internal combustion equipment on dry ground, maintaining a smoke-free workforce, using thoughtful water management, and understanding that the farm's driest, unirrigated areas are its most vulnerable. Barking Moon Farm's updated employee handbook includes disaster response and communication procedures, reflecting a growing emphasis on preparedness across many farms in the valley. These policies are an important step toward developing more comprehensive evacuation and disaster preparedness plans.

Bringing concerns about safety, habitat, and land stewardship into the future, Pacifica: a Garden in the Siskiyou, is hosting several programs emphasizing fire safety. Director Vanessa Redding works closely with local fire agencies. “As stewards of more than 400 acres of forests, fields, and waterways,” she says, “Pacifica is committed to maintaining a safe environment through ongoing wildfire preparedness and fire prevention practices.” Pacifica recently installed a 12,000-gallon water storage tank to support their new fire suppression system for the Great Hall, enhancing fire safety and helping protect one of Williams's primary community gathering spaces. As part of the Resilience Hubs effort in Williams, Pacifica has initiated the process of becoming a Red Cross shelter. Staff and educators working at Pacifica receive an annual fire and disaster preparedness training in the spring that is repeated in each of their programs or workshops.

As a community, we're building resilience by adapting to changing conditions. As drought persists and summers grow hotter and smoky days more common, farmers and land stewards are rethinking how they manage their land and how they

care for themselves and those around them. An emotional toll accompanies these practical challenges. Grief, stress, anxiety, and uncertainty can occur as people watch familiar landscapes change as they face the wildfire risks that have become increasingly persistent in rural life.

Maud and Tom Powell experienced these challenges firsthand. “After 23 years of farming on a property we loved (Wolf Gulch), we made the difficult decision to move because worsening drought conditions and increasing heat made it harder and harder to sustain our farming operation,” they said. “Leaving a farm is never just a business decision; it also means leaving a place filled with memories, relationships, and a deep connection to the land. Our experience reflects a growing reality for many agricultural producers who are adapting not only their farming practices but, in some cases, their lives in response to a changing climate.”

These feelings are a natural response to living with ongoing wildfire risk, yet good planning can provide a sense of confidence and stability. Developing an evacuation plan, identifying alternate routes, making arrangements for livestock and pets, and gathering

essential documents and emergency supplies allow people to make decisions before they're under pressure. When an emergency does occur, that preparation can ease uncertainty and help people respond more calmly and effectively.

Over the past two years, American Farmland Trust offered wildfire preparedness workshops as part of our Supporting Fire Resilient Ranching Communities project. There are many additional fire readiness resources available and numerous resourceful people in the Applegate Valley. Firefighting personnel can be invited to walk your property and offer productive steps you can take to protect your buildings and possessions. A Greater Applegate is currently working with local partner organizations and community members to develop Resilience Hubs to provide our community with facilities to support residents, coordinate communication, and distribute needed resources before, during, and after an emergency or natural disaster. A Greater Applegate hosts a Wildfire and Emergency Resources website at applegateconnect.org/resources/wildfire-and-emergency-resources/.

Tracy Harding
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Why More Homeowners Are Choosing Water Softeners

By Quinn's Well

Hard water is a common issue in many homes and can affect everything from plumbing fixtures to skin comfort and appliance performance.

Minerals such as calcium and magnesium found in hard water may not be harmful to drink, but over time they can create scale buildup inside pipes, water heaters, and household appliances. Many homeowners also notice stubborn spotting on dishes, staining around fixtures, and dry skin or hair after bathing.

According to Quinn's Well Pump & Filtration Service, installing a water softener can help improve both water quality and the efficiency of a home's plumbing system.

Some of the most common benefits homeowners notice include:

- Reduced scale buildup on plumbing fixtures and appliances
- Easier cleaning with less spotting and staining
- Softer feeling water for bathing and washing
- Improved efficiency and lifespan of water heaters

Quinn's installs the CareSoft Pro water softener system, designed to help reduce hardness minerals while maintaining reliable water flow throughout the home.

Water conditions vary from property to property, making proper testing and system sizing important when selecting a treatment system. A professional evaluation can help determine the right setup for each household's water usage and conditions.

For homeowners dealing with hard water, a water softener may offer a simple solution that improves comfort, cleaning, and long-term plumbing performance.

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Another effort to preserve Applegate history

BY LAURA B. AHEARN

For several days in 2019, the evacuation zone around McKee Bridge was under a Level 1 warning. I wondered what we could do to protect our treasured bridge if an evacuation order was issued. I realized the immensity of the risk to our Applegate heritage, not just to physical structures like the bridge, the Depression-era community kitchen, and the 1860s barn of Kinder Boaz, but also to photographs and papers

such as those collected by McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) founder, Evelyn Williams. To preserve such documentary resources, MBHS launched our virtual museum at mckeebridge.org.

However, many historical images and records pertinent to the Applegate no longer remain in the Applegate Valley. Some departed in the photo albums and keepsake chests of families



Haying in a mountain valley. Photo: Russell Lee.

who relocated. Others are archived at the Southern Oregon Historical Society (SOHS), but Jackson County Library Services has terminated funding for an SOHS archivist effective September 30. Additional materials are housed in Southern Oregon University's (SOU) Hannon Library. Hannon has digitized and posted some items, but others, like the handwritten journals of Marguerite

Black, remain as flammable, friable paper. Besides, interpreting penmanship is a disappearing skill!

As with SOHS, we should not take Hannon for granted as a repository. SOU's financial troubles and shrinking student body, staff, and curricula raise doubts that the institution can or should continue to dedicate nine feet of shelf space, taxpayer dollars, and the time of librarians to Marguerite's writings. As of 2025, no researcher had delved into the diary to interpret what

it reveals about Applegate history or to transform the bleed-through inkings into a readable narrative.

Well, you can guess who took up that task.

A Greater Applegate awarded MBHS an Innovation Grant for editing and layout services. The volumes at Hannon start in 1932. I decided to focus

See APPLEGATE HISTORY, page 18.

■ NATIVE OAK LEGACY PROJECT

Continued from page 3.

Community support extends far beyond conservation organizations. Musicians, artists, educators, volunteers, and neighbors all contributed their talents, demonstrating that successful conservation is built upon relationships as much as restoration. As an environmental advocate, local author, and proprietor of RiverCrest Ranch Wines, I donated both time and support during Art in the Oaks, sharing copies of my book, *Trail Mix: Food for the Sole*, and helping showcase Applegate wines. The Applegate Valley has long been defined by its rugged beauty, vineyards, forests, farms, and independent spirit. The Native Oak Legacy Project reflects those same values. Every acorn planted represents an investment not only in wildlife habitat and watershed health, but also in the children who will inherit this remarkable valley.

Oregon white oaks can live for several centuries. The seedlings planted by today's students may one day provide shade for future generations, shelter countless birds and pollinators, stabilize soils, and stand as living reminders that communities working together can accomplish remarkable things. Projects like this succeed because they belong to everyone.

From Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District's financial support to the educational leadership of the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council, from Rooted In Hope's vision to the creativity of local artists, musicians, businesses, and organizations like A Greater Applegate, the Native Oak Legacy Project represents the very best of community collaboration.

Together, the Applegate Valley isn't simply planting trees. It's cultivating hope, stewardship, and a living legacy that will endure for centuries.

Cathy Rodgers
cathyrodgers55@gmail.com



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THE GRAPES OF CATH

Where earth and air become wine

BY CATHY A. RODGERS

On the Applegate Valley Wine Trail, earth and air work together to tell a story. Visitors arrive drawn by the valley's beauty—rolling hills, oak woodlands, the Applegate River, and the surrounding Siskiyou Mountains. They discover welcoming tasting rooms, scenic vineyards, and a community rooted in agriculture. But what many don't realize is that every bottle of Applegate Valley wine begins long before grapes are harvested. It begins with the land itself.

Winegrowers speak of “terroir,” a French term that describes how a wine reflects the place where it is grown. Terroir includes climate, geology, soil, elevation, and even the weather patterns that move through a region. Few places illustrate this connection more clearly than the Applegate Valley. Plaisance Ranch Winery's Viognier epitomizes this rare earth combination, with each bottle a flagon of magic where the seasons and geography blend into a fruitful continuum. For Joe and Suzi Ginot, it's a generational commitment to land stewardship and handcrafted wines for a family who have worked this land since 1858.

The Applegate valley sits within a complex geologic landscape shaped over millions of years. Ancient uplift, volcanic activity, and erosion created a patchwork of soils unlike those found in many wine-growing regions. A single vineyard may contain rocky slopes, gravelly benches, clay-rich pockets, and ancient river deposits. These soils influence how vines grow, how deeply roots reach for water, and ultimately how grapes develop flavor and character.

Yet soil tells only half the story. Air is equally important. The Applegate Valley's unique position between mountain ranges creates a climate that winegrowers have come to know intimately. Warm summer days encourage grapes to ripen fully, while cool evenings help preserve acidity and freshness. Afternoon breezes move through the valley, moderating temperatures and reducing disease pressure. Seasonal shifts, winter rains, spring growth, and autumn harvest all arrive according to rhythms shaped by the surrounding mountains.

Each year brings its own variations. Some growing seasons are warmer, others cooler. Some years bring abundant rain; others challenge growers with drought. Smoke from regional wildfires has become an increasing concern. Yet these changing conditions are not merely obstacles. They are part of the ongoing dialogue between nature and agriculture that defines farming in the Applegate. Winegrowers spend



much of their lives observing these forces. They watch weather forecasts, monitor soil moisture, evaluate vine growth, and adapt their farming practices to changing conditions. Success depends not on controlling nature but on understanding it.

Augustino Estate & Vineyard, under the leadership of Debbie Spencer and Reggie Augustine Boltz, celebrates earth, air, and water at their Big Red Barn in the heart of the Applegate along with their Treehouse Tasting Room in O'Brien and Coastal Tasting Room in Brookings.

This relationship is one reason wine has become such an important part of the valley's identity. The Applegate Valley Wine Trail is home to 15 wineries and countless acres of vineyards. Together they support jobs, attract visitors, and contribute to the local economy. But their influence extends beyond economics. Vineyards help preserve open space and agricultural landscapes that define the valley's rural character. They coexist with oak savannas, wildlife corridors, streams, and working farms. Many growers actively steward their land, balancing agricultural production with conservation of native habitats and natural resources.

For residents, wine often serves as a gathering point. Tasting rooms host community events, music, celebrations, and conversations. Visitors come for the wine but leave with a deeper appreciation for the valley itself. In many ways, wine becomes an ambassador for the Applegate, introducing people to its landscapes, history, and agricultural heritage.

As autumn arrives and vineyards prepare for harvest, the connection between earth and air becomes especially visible. Clusters of grapes hang heavy on the vines, carrying within them the story of an entire growing season. The minerals of the soil, the warmth of summer days, the cooling evening breezes, and the seasonal rhythms of the valley all find expression in the fruit.

When those grapes are transformed into wine, they become something more than a beverage. They become a reflection of the place. In the Applegate Valley, wine is not simply grown. It is shaped by the land beneath our feet and the air that moves through our mountains. It is one of the clearest examples of how earth and air continue to shape our livelihoods, our communities, and our connection to this remarkable valley.

Cathy Rodgers
cathyrodgers55@gmail.com



Augustino's Big Red Barn is a favorite Applegate Valley gathering place for wine tasting and a taste of nature. Photo by Laurel Briggs.

What if this was the day?

BY HAYRIYA HEIDI HANSEN

What if today was The Day? What if you had only 1440 minutes left? Only approximately 20,000 breaths? What would you do? Something different? Where would you go? Are there calls to make? Amends to seek? Love to share? Paperwork and business details to wrap up? People you'd want to see?

So here goes this crazy gal writing about death and dying... again! Or perhaps you prefer the more euphemistic terms: passing away, moving on, going to the other side, slipped away, departed, gone home, at rest, lost the battle. Maybe the more clinical terms: expired, perished, fatal. Or the more poetic: the final sleep, crossed the great divide, crossed the rainbow bridge, returned to the earth. And of course there are the slang versions: kicked the bucket, bought the farm, croaked, bit the dust. We have many ways to say one has died, many ways to acknowledge that our own “ticket to the beyond” has been drawn. And depending upon our familiarity with death, our comfort with acknowledging our own demise, our past interactions with those dying, and our various life events and spiritual and religious beliefs, many factors influence how (or even if) we are able to comprehend on a mental, physical, and spiritual level the fact that each of us will, at some moment in time, die.

Around the world, approximately 121 people die every minute. Will you or I be one of them in the next minute? And what does that really mean? Is there an “other side”? A rebirth? Or is it just lights out, done and gone? Will I suffer? Now that's a question most people do wonder about and often fear. Have you ever really contemplated your own death? It sounds rather morbid. Yet even AI suggests that it is a “powerful practice that can strip away trivial concerns,

ease existential anxiety, and awaken profound gratitude for the present moment. By consciously engaging with the impermanence of life, you reframe your time as a finite, precious gift.”

Many believe they will find some pure gold when they bask in the truth that they will die and it could happen today. It is a powerful practice to hold the truth, even for just one minute every day, that “I will die.” Perhaps even reading this brings a momentary solidity to this fact. All the petty hoo-ha of life becomes trivial, and what truly matters becomes evident. When one genuinely grasps the deep understanding that death, your death, my death, is inevitable, then living authentically becomes a practice, what one might call “a way of living fully alive.”

These are the folks I meet at death cafes, people who have grappled with life's ultimate reality: that all this beauty, suffering, joy, grief, love, and loss will one day no longer plague us. We will be gone! I meet beautiful, sensitive people of all ages who have questions about the way they think, feel, and behave. Death cafes draw people who have expanded the boundaries of their feelings and emotions, who are ready to meet the infinite expanse of possibilities.

If you have an inquiring mind and want to talk (or listen) with other like-minded folks, then please join our Southern Oregon Living and Dying Alliance facilitators for one (or more!) of the five death cafes held throughout southern Oregon each month. Please check our website for further information at solada.org. We look forward to seeing you and your family and friends at one of our many events.

Hayriya Heidi A. Hansen
541-787-7490
soladaoregon@gmail.com

■ APPLEGATE HISTORY

Continued from page 17.

on the Great Depression years through 1939. But when the initial phase of the work was nearly complete, I realized the product (then conceived as an online flipbook) fell far short. Obvious questions remained unanswered, connections among families and events were ignored, and uncomfortable topics were swept under the rug. Content and analysis were deceptively incomplete. I started over, finding and scrutinizing additional primary sources like the County Clerk's election ledgers, Sisters of Providence hospital archives, and the Secretary of State's mining records.

A much-improved and deeply researched version is now in print—*Applegate Valley During the Great Depression: Reflections on the Diary of Marguerite Watson Black*. This book integrates the perspectives of four women who were friends and contemporaries in the Applegate during the 1930s. Evelyn Williams provides her childhood memories and wonderful photographs. Maude Pool's observations as a newspaper reporter come from the duplicate of her scrapbook made by Evelyn. Frances Port, the witty daughter of Forest Service Ranger Lee Port, speaks through photos exchanged with Evelyn's family and an early oral history.

Barbara Holiday, longtime editor of the *Applegater*, patiently and expertly handled editing and layout. Laurel Briggs cleaned up my amateur graphics.

My parents grew up during the Great Depression. As a historian since college,

I thought I had a good understanding of that era. I was wrong. The process of closely analyzing Marguerite's writings (her 1989 publications as well as the diary), testing her reports against known facts, and filling in gaps led me to a much deeper and more accurate comprehension. My book is scholarly, but I believe that all readers and especially history buffs will find it to be easy reading and enlightening, a portal to understanding life here 90 years ago.

Membership in MBHS through December 31, 2027, is open. Join now, and you'll be in good standing for 14 months. Dues remain \$20 for your entire household. New and renewing members who add a minimum donation of \$25 will receive, as a thank-you gift, their own copy of *Applegate Valley During the Great Depression*. The book and memberships will be available at the Applegate Evening Market on September 9 and 30, and the MBHS Annual Meeting and potluck at McKee Bridge on Saturday, September 12, noon-2 pm. Or sign up and donate at mckeebridge.org.

Many people helped with this book. I would love to list them, but I've exhausted the word limit for this article. Please get your copy and share a thank-you to everyone in the Acknowledgments. And I thank you, *Applegater* readers, for caring about local history.

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

●●●BIZBITS●●●

BY LYNN TOWNS

Specialized Arbor Services (SAS) is currently booking their winter fuels reduction season! From November 1 through April 1, Carl and his crew at SAS focus on wildfire mitigation and defensible space projects, helping landowners reduce fuel loads before the next fire season arrives. Late fall and winter are the perfect time to complete this work, and their calendar fills quickly. Call or text 541-415-9332 to learn more and schedule your project. Licensed, bonded, and insured (LCB #100384).

Valley View Winery added another ribbon to their collection! The Syrah Domaine Rogue 2022 won Double Gold, Best in Class at Savor Southern Oregon in June 2026. You would do well to pair a bottle (or two?) of this award-winning wine with good food and good friends, regaling them with this full-bodied Syrah that has notes of ripe blackberry and a touch of smoke, with a long finish. The winery is located at 1000 Upper Applegate Rd., Jacksonville, Oregon 97530.
Lynn Towns
lynntowns1@gmail.com

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.

CHAIR’S REPORT

BY DIANA COOGLE

Have you seen our new website? Designed by Alyssa Prophet and board member Whit Whitney, it looks spiffy and modern and is user-friendly. Even I find it easy to navigate. Check it out, and let us know what you think.

The board continues to grow in numbers and in strength as we welcome our newest member, Kat Gore. (See page 15 to learn more.) Kat will be our social media coordinator. Thanks to Jeanette LeTourneux, our Facebook page has been active for years; now, with Kat’s help, our online presence will be augmented and strengthened. Go to our Facebook page to see what I mean.

Thanks to the efforts of board member Lynn Towns, we are gearing up for our volunteers’ thank-you party at Red Lily. If you are one of the many people who help keep the *Applegater* a vibrant presence in the community through regular volunteer work—writing articles, sending photos, distributing papers, serving on the board, or helping in other ways—you will be receiving an invitation. We hope you’ll plan to come. It’s our way of saying, “Thank you, thank you, thank you. We appreciate you!”

The board is regretfully saying farewell to Greg Stanko, who is stepping down from the board due to life’s complications (something we can all relate to!). He gave the board good energy while he was with us. We wish him well going forward.

Finally, I want to slip in a reminder that NewsMatch is coming up in November, when donations that come in during November and December are doubled by the NewsMatch grant. That’s the time to donate! We’ll send out a reminder edition of the *Applegater* in November.
Diana Coogle
diana@applegater.org

■ STEVE AND CHERI ROOT

Continued from page 11.
fulfill that need. “We want church to be more involved in people’s lives than just for marriage and death,” he says.
Although Steve and Cheri are dedicated to their church as their profession and their calling, they include more than their congregants in their concept of community. Every year for the past three years they have had a harvest festival in October, free to all in the Applegate,

with food and games. “Anybody can come,” Cheri says with a warm smile. It’s a chance for the Roots to bring the community together and introduce them to the church.
This year’s festival will be on October 17.
They hold a similar community gathering for the Fourth of July, also free to the community.
Diana Coogle
diana@applegater.org



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■ OSHALA THANK YOU

Continued from page 8.
We also want to thank Sara Katz and Ed Smith, who founded Herb Pharm here and helped build an industry that now looks to this valley as a standard-bearer, and Mark Wheeler, founder of Pacific Botanicals and one of the most influential people in Oshala’s history, who showed up for us personally in the days after the fire, just like he always has. Between them and neighbors like Banyan Botanicals and Strictly Medicinal Seeds, this narrow valley holds some of the most respected names in herbal products on earth.
Rebuilding barns, coolers, a mechanic shop—everything it takes years to build the first time—is not a season’s work. It’s a long row to hoe, and we know we’ll be walking it for years yet. What you’ve done for us hasn’t been the finish line. It’s the reason we can keep walking it at all.
There is magic in this valley, and the community is what makes it work. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for everything.
With love and gratitude,
Elise, Jeff, and the entire Oshala Farm team
Elise Higley
elise@oshalafarm.com

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At Team Senior Referral Services, Inc., we work alongside doctors, hospitals, skilled nursing communities, and families every day. Many physicians have us on speed dial and will call us while you are still in the examination room. We can meet you directly in the hospital or at home in non-emergencies, and we strongly encourage families to contact us the moment a hospital admission occurs to help avoid costly mistakes and ensure the best possible outcome.

Jamie Callahan is a respected advocate and leader in senior care across Southern Oregon. As Founder and CEO of Team Senior, she built the organization on a commitment to honest guidance, personalized support, and doing what is right for families—every time.

Her work has also helped shape the industry. Jamie drafted the original legislation that lead to Oregon House Bill 2661 (2016–2017), promoting transparency and accountability in senior referral services. Her advocacy continues to focus on protecting seniors and ensuring families have access to trustworthy, ethical support.

Today, Jamie leads a team of dedicated professionals who bring both expertise and heart to every family they serve.

Please always call the main line at Team Senior if you are unsure of who to call. Our team is adding two additional people in the next 6 weeks, so this will evolve: (541) 295-8230.



Linda Griesser brings over 12 years of experience in senior living including leadership roles as an Executive Director and opening a Memory Care community. What truly sets Linda apart

is her ability to act quickly in times of crisis. She is often at the hospital bedside with families, helping them make urgent decisions

Team Senior REFERRAL SERVICES

with clarity and confidence—guidance that can protect both the health of their loved one and their financial well-being. Families appreciate her calm presence, honesty, and ability to find real solutions when time matters most.

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Veronica Noble is known for her exceptional organization, timeliness, and follow-through. Families and professionals alike consistently praise her for making

complex situations feel manageable. With a background spanning senior living and medical offices, she brings both knowledge and heart to her work. Veronica is deeply committed to making sure every family receives not just answers, but the full level of advocacy they deserve—ensuring nothing falls through the cracks.

(541) 941-6066 / All Providence businesses & The VA / Medford



Cherie Linnemeyer serves seniors and families in Roseburg and Josephine County with a warm, relationship-focused approach. With over six years of experience in senior advocacy, she is known for

truly listening and helping families feel at ease during difficult transitions. Whether she is connecting someone to benefits, care resources, or safe living options, Cherie's goal is always the same: to make sure every person feels heard, respected, and supported.

(541) 761-3542 / Grants Pass & Roseburg

Lori Camacho brings energy, positivity, and a deep passion for serving seniors and veterans. As Executive Director of Club Sixty, she

is widely respected for creating a strong sense of community and connection. Within Team Senior, Lori plays a key supporting role—often working behind the scenes and alongside the team to help “wrap around” families with the care and resources they need. Her heart for service and team-first mindset make

her an invaluable part of the mission.

Together, Team Senior provides compassionate, knowledgeable guidance during some of life's most important transitions.

Call the main line (541) 295-8230.

Club Sixty is a senior social club in Grants Pass where everything is FREE and paid for by Team Senior. Club Sixty offers Tai Chi, Chair Yoga, Games, Line Dancing and more. If you are calling for information about Club Sixty – please call Lori directly at (541) 441-1426 or visit our website at www.clubsixty.org.

How We Can Help You

Navigating senior care can feel overwhelming—but you don't have to do it alone. Team Senior helps families throughout Southern Oregon identify the right care solutions based on individual needs, preferences, and financial considerations.

There are hundreds of factors involved in long-term care decisions—far more than any one person can reasonably manage. Care levels, regulations, availability, and costs are constantly changing. As a team, we bring this knowledge together so nothing is overlooked.

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Why Expertise Matters

After more than a decade serving families under the Team Senior name, one thing is clear: no one should navigate long-term care decisions alone.

Even as professionals, we are learning every day. The landscape changes quickly, and missing just one detail can lead to costly or unsafe outcomes. Many organizations only share information that benefits them—not always what is best for you.

Having a trusted, experienced team ensures you receive honest, unbiased guidance focused entirely on your needs. At Team Senior, we stand beside you every step of the way—bringing clarity, advocacy, and peace of mind when it matters most.

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AVHS is moving forward and keeping history alive

BY BARBARA NIEDERMEYER

The Applegate Valley Historical Society (AVHS) is moving forward. Yes, we lost the property where our museum building sat, so we are now searching for a place to call home. We have several irons in the fire and are trying to sort out which will work best.

With that being said, no matter where we choose, there will be costs. With your help, we can do this.

We will hold a yard sale on September 5 and 6, 2026, from 10 am-4 pm at Horsefeather Farms, 13291 Hwy 238. Donations are welcome, starting August 15. Contact Maryanna at 541-941-0000 or Barbara at 541-659-3984.

Our working group gathers once a month on the first Monday at 10 am at the Applegate Library. You are welcome to join us in resolving our issues. We hold quarterly meetings on the second Saturday of February, May, August, and November at the Applegate Library at 10 am. We strive to be involved in historical events throughout the Applegate Valley (and beyond!) to share the interesting history of our region.

Last July, AVHS and Jackson County Library Services co-hosted a screening of a documentary, “House of Threads,” presented by Williams resident Heather Paladini. This screening, inspired by Southern Oregon Historical Society’s

(SOHS) lunchtime series, Windows in Time, showed a documentary about a Portuguese family in the Applegate and the murder of one of its members, Antone Joseph. The film can be viewed at the “JCLS Beyond” YouTube channel by searching for “Azoreans in the Applegate: The Murder of Antone Joseph (Windows in Time).”

AVHS was also invited to participate in the SOHS Car Show at Hanley Farm on August 1.

We at AVHS feel the importance of sharing Applegate history beyond the Applegate Valley and enjoy connections and discussions about family history at every event.

Become a member and help support our AVHS. We’ll send you a quarterly newsletter. Membership is \$25 for one person, \$40 for two, or \$50 for a family. Send payment to AVHS, 3120 Thompson Creek Road, Applegate, Oregon, 97530. Include your name(s) and address.



Janis Mohr-Tipton and Alicia Hogan at the AVHS booth at Hanley Farm.

Donations are always welcome. With your support, we can continue our work.

Barbara Niedermeyer
bnkoalasrkool@gmail.com



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My contact information
Heather Paladini, Program Director
text or call 336-937-2882
email wildoakpreschool@gmail.com
www.wildoakpreschool.com

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Photos, left to right:
–**Cathy Rodgers (L)** and her granddaughter **Brooke Maley (R)** taking in the Applegater on their rooftop balcony overlooking beautiful Lake Bled in Slovenia.
–**Kaitlin Hills (L), Jacob Hills (R),** and their kids **Abigail (L) and Sam Hills (R),** reading the Applegater at Great Wolf Lodge in Centralia, Washington.
–**Selah Brindley** catching up with the Applegater from the Atlantic Ocean.
–**Mika** in New South Wales, Australia in front of Wollumbin (settler named Mt. Warning).
– Applegater **Kat Gore** spotted in Tahiti!

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