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Applegate Valley Community Newsmagazine
Serving Jackson and Josephine Counties — Circulation: 13,000

Celebrating
~26~
Years

Applegate responds to COVID-19 crisis

BY JEANETTE LETOURNEUX, TOM CARSTENS, AND BERT ETLING

The coronavirus crisis has brought out the best in so many people in our valley. Our community members have rallied valiantly and come to the rescue of many, demonstrating typical Applegater ingenuity and generosity.

Applegate Valley businesses, often supported by generous donations, have stepped up with generosity and open hearts during this pandemic to help people in our community.

And individuals have donated time and materials to help make sure healthcare providers have the equipment they need to cope with COVID-19.

Local nonprofit organizations have stepped up their efforts, too. A Greater Applegate (AGA) started posting Oregon Health Agency updates on its community website, applegateconnect.org, along with news about community business

and employment resources and tools to connect people in need with people with resources. (For more, see the AGA column on page seven.)

Examples of business generosity include these two (for more, see BizBits on page twenty):

- On April 12, the Applegate Lodge (541-846-6082) started providing free Sunday dinners from 5 - 7 pm to anyone in the Applegate community, thanks to many donors.

- The Applegate Country Club (541-846-1666) offered delivery of a free bag of groceries to seniors. The Senior Care Package has been a huge success, thanks to all the contributors. The Country Club is also providing free lunches to kids.

Applegate residents, in turn, have supported local businesses through donations to support their efforts, by shopping at essential businesses while practicing safe behavior, by purchasing gift cards (in effect, a short-term,



While wearing masks and keeping the recommended six feet apart, Cathy Rodgers, board chair of A Greater Applegate, at right, delivers a \$500 momentum grant to Cyn Torp, proprietor of the Applegate Country Club, to support the club's delivery of complimentary pizza and salad to the elderly during the shelter-in-place period. Photo: Yolanda Jaime.

interest-free loan to the business), and by joining community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs at local farms.

Face-mask maker

Local residents have also helped out with making "PPE" (personal protective

equipment) for use both by the general public and health care providers.

Applegate resident Gary Conner has been churning out face shields for the local medical community. Gary takes materials

See COVID-19 IMPACT, page 4

Related news: See the COVID-19 content roundup on page five



A Lomakatsi crew member ignites piled slash from an ecological thinning operation during a controlled burn on private land near Jacksonville. Photo: Tom Greco.

Forest restoration workers practice social distancing

BY PAUL FATTIG

In the quarter of a century Lomakatsi has existed, the nonprofit group dedicated to forest and watershed restoration as well as wildfire mitigation in Oregon and Northern California has overcome countless natural challenges in the form of drought, flood and wildfire.

But nothing prepared it for the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have never faced anything like this," stressed executive director Marko Bey, who founded the group in 1995. "Right after we started, we had the '97 flood. But we responded and did landslide stabilization and revegetation work. And we have responded with wildland fire crews and engine crews to fight wildfires. But this pandemic is a new kind of challenge."

On top of the pandemic is the potentially historic 2020 fire season which began May 1 in Jackson and Josephine counties, marking the earliest start in the region since 1988. Lomakatsi transitions its ground crews into wildland firefighters at the start of fire season.

See LOMAKATSI, page 14

Triple whammy: no morels, a long fire season, and a virus

BY SANDY SHAFFER

It was only mid-April, and we were already seeing Brian Ballou (the ODF's spokesman) on the evening news talking about the number of "runaway burn piles" and why residents should be preparing *now* for fire season. On the scanner I was already hearing a lot of alarms for grass fires, and landowners whose burn piles have escaped control.

Ryan Sandler, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Medford, said in late April that "we're not going to get big enough storms this time of year to make up" for the lack of a snowpack. But a recent trip to my special morel mushroom site in the middle of April signed the deal for me: not one tiny handful of mushrooms all spring! Yup, it's going to be a long, dry fire season this year.

So, Mother Nature is short of water, but the real kicker for us this year is the double whammy of reduced rainfall *and* the coronavirus! I say this because loads of slash pile burning and prescribed burns in our region *had to be canceled this spring*

See FIRE SEASON, page 15

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ENVIRONMENT - FIRE - RECREATION

OBITUARIES

Jonathan Clifford Spero

November 30, 1952 - April 13, 2020

Join us in remembrance and celebration of Jonathan Clifford Spero. Jonathan was a hard-working man with a heart of gold, who was still farming and writing on his last living day on Earth. He left this realm peacefully and unexpectedly on April 13, 2020, at home in Provolt, Oregon, in his sleep.

Jonathan came to this world on November 30, 1952, in Buffalo, NY, into the loving home of his parents, A. June and Robert David Spero. He joined older brother, David, and later welcomed younger brother, Daniel.

He was an adventurous spirit with a great love of music, who ventured to Woodstock in 1969. He loved

to sing and play guitar and was a great supporter of local musicians.

Throughout his life, Jonathan was active in political causes, opposing the Vietnam War and supporting the women's rights and anti-war movements.

An aspiring farmer, Jonathan bought *How to Grow Vegetables & Fruits by the Organic Method*, by J.I. Rodale, and immediately left New York in search of cheap and fertile land. His search brought him to Glenville, West Virginia, where he met the love of his life, Jessie Ellen Rader. They married on September 20, 1975. Jonathan became a land surveyor, and they moved to Southern Oregon, where they raised their three children, Orion, Rose, and Heidi.

Successful and revered as a professional land surveyor, Jonathan retired in 2011 to put his time and passion into plant breeding. He brought to fruition many of his own varieties, including Siber Frill Kale, Solstice Broccoli, Emerald Fan Lettuce, and Top Hat, Festivity,

Zanadoo, Tuxana, and Aloha #9 open-pollinated sweet corns.

A founding board member of the Open Source Seed Initiative, Jonathan worked tirelessly to maintain fair and open access to plant genetics. He wrote numerous articles on plant breeding and agriculture and was often invited to speak at conferences. He was a Grange member from 1981 until his death.

Seedsmen, Seed Mentor, Seed Protector, Seed Friend, Corn Breeder, Earth Lover, Righteous Family Man, Beloved Friend of Many, Jonathan planted his love into the hearts of his many friends and family and into the land and the seeds he bred

and cultivated for the greater good of people and planet.

He also helped lead a successful campaign banning GMO crops in Jackson County, all the while fighting for statewide protections for seed diversity, and keeping seeds open-source and accessible to all farmers.

Preceded in death by his parents, Jonathan will be dearly missed by his loving wife of 45 years, Jessie; his children and those he treated as his own children; his son-in-law, Mukil; his brothers and their partners; nephews Sekani and Mathias; Ron, Donna and Ira; his many friends; and fans of his work.

Jonathan was laid to rest at Hartley Cemetery in his beloved Williams. A celebration of life is planned for later in the summer. Friends are invited to contact Karen at karen@gaiasophia.com to attend work parties being planned to help care for Jonathan's land and gardens.

**Mike Kohn**

November 29, 1949 - May 7, 2020

Mike Kohn, Diana Coogle's husband and Applegate Neighborhood Network board member, passed away on May 7, 2020, at his home in Medford.

Mike was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on November 29, 1949. He lived at Molto Bene, on Slagle Creek in the Applegate, for 30 years.

He was a strong hiker and an advocate for environmental health, especially in the Applegate. As a board member of Applegate Trails Association, he helped build the popular East Applegate Ridge Trail.

Both employees and customers of his business, Home Comfort Hearth, held him in great esteem and will miss his



Mike Kohn and Diana Coogle, on their honeymoon near Trinidad, California, in May 2019.

cheerful demeanor and competence with his business.

Our corner of the world is a better place for his having been here.

Daryl Jackson

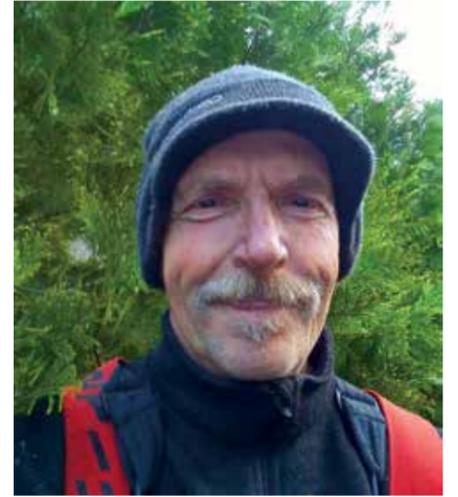
October 26, 1951 - March 23, 2020

Daryl Jackson, 68, of Williams, died March 23 after a battle with cancer.

The third-generation southern Oregonian grew up here and loved it. He was an avid river person who rafted, guided, and fished.

Friends remember him as a force of nature in the Williams/Applegate area who was very much committed to the preservation of our environment and as a caring, compassionate, giving, generous, loyal friend. He helped initiate Applegate and Williams Watershed Council riparian tree planting programs and was biologist and coordinator of the Williams Waterway Project, which served as a statewide model for maintaining roadside vegetation without the use of herbicides.

Daryl was a member of the Williams Town Council. In a campaign flyer, he wrote, "I have always believed that it is important to give something back to the place we live. For me, that means



improving the land and waters of Oregon and specifically Williams."

He lived lightly on the earth. He was an animal lover and Alpine skier. He was a father and a grandfather. He loved his family dearly.



Paragliders launch from Woodrat Mountain. Photo: Terri Eubanks.

Flying will—someday—return to the Applegate Valley

BY TERRI STEWART

Woodrat Mountain, in the Applegate Valley, has been a well-known launching site for thrill-seeking aviators since the late 1970s. The launch site was pioneered by two men, Jeff Van Datta and Doug Hildreth, who recognized Woodrat Mountain, near Ruch, Oregon, as a safe location and whose enthusiasm, leadership, and methodic thinking would evolve into the creation of a local club and decades of continuous flight from the world-class site.

Their knowledge and mentorship pioneered flying instruction from Woodrat and planted the roots of the Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association. The dynamic duo taught hang gliding in those early years, though the majority of pilots using Woodrat today are paragliding pilots. Both popular sports demand respect for the environment, including knowledge of the weather and landscape, while delivering a sense of absolute joy no other sport comes close to.

Pilots come from all over the world to take to the Applegate skies, where on a great day pilots are able to fly to Grants Pass and as far as Weed, California. And spectators come, too, taking advantage of local wineries and restaurants to catch sight of the colorful canopies that have become part of the local culture in the Applegate.

Today, local leaders carry on the legacy built by Hildreth and Van Datta, incorporating careful learning instruction and opportunities, formulating practical

flight patterns, and generally teaching respect for the love of flight.

The club consists of roughly 60 members who support each other and the community through partnerships with landowners whose properties serve as landing zones; the Bureau of Land Management, which owns and manages the launch site; and the Oregon Department of Transportation, which benefits from club members' annual cleanup along Highway 238. They also do other small projects such as providing signage at Cantrall Buckley Park, and they sponsor the Applegate Open, an annual sanctioned race event, typically held in June, that fills the sky with hundreds of paragliders as pilots race to their goal.

As of early May, it appears the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to force the club to cancel its 2020 event, but flight will continue from Woodrat for decades to come. Those who are interested in instruction or in simply learning more can visit RVHPA.org for a list of instructors, and information about Woodrat and other nearby flying sites, including Whaleback in northern California.

The club also typically sponsors another small fly-in annually in September. Both events serve as a great opportunity to visit the Applegate Valley.

Terri Stewart, President
Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and
Paragliding Association
president2019@RVHPA.org

Superb swimming-hole hopping

BY DIANA COOGLE

One beastly hot day, years ago, I went swimming-hole hopping, hitting three Applegate swimming holes in one day: Carberry Creek, Applegate Gorge, Emerald Pool. If you, too, are a swimming-hole hopper, try one of these itineraries:

Carberry Creek-Applegate Gorge-Emerald Pool

From Carberry Creek Road, walk down the steep, deeply rutted side road to a glorious swimming hole, deep and startlingly cold, rock-lined, with a small beach for towels, sunhats, books, and a picnic. A big flat rock across the water is great for sunbathing.

When the sun disappears in early afternoon, gather your things and drive past the Applegate Lake, past Seattle Bar, and down Forest Service Road 1040 to the Applegate gorge, where the river gushes green and white through the narrow passage, with good swimming before, through, and after it. The gorge is a favorite hangout for young people.

Finish the itinerary by driving to the Middle Fork trail and walking half a mile for an elfin swim in the aptly named Emerald Pool: green water at the base of a small white-rushing waterfall.

Seattle Bar-Applegate Lake-McKee Bridge

Begin this itinerary at Seattle Bar, the picnic area at the upper end of Applegate Lake, where you can swim under the eeping cry of ospreys overhead.

Next return down Upper Applegate Road to Hart-Tish campground. Walk through the woods to a green sward sloping to the lake (and maybe also across mud flats, depending on the season). When the lake is full, the swimming in blue water under the distant snow-peaked Red Buttes is spectacular.

But don't get carried away. McKee Bridge awaits. The swimming hole is downriver from the bridge, accessed by a short set of rocks and steps. Across the creek is a cliff for rock-jumping with a rope for a good swing into the water. Afterward, you can barbecue dinner in one of the barbecue pits in the park, or, if you've made a reservation (at recreation.gov), you can picnic in the McKee Bridge day-use shelter, constructed of pine timber with Civilian Conservation Corps masonry. It has a beautiful stone fireplace and is on the registry of National Historic Sites.

Cantrall Buckley

A good itinerary used to include Cantrall Buckley Park and the swimming hole near the Applegate Store, where daring young men would dive from rocks to show off to sunbathing beauties while children waded, looking for colorful rocks. Then the land was sold and a fence erected, and alas. (Editor's note: The owner of Merete's Cove, Keith Wetlesen, encourages



Diana Coogle takes a swim in the Emerald Pool on the Middle Fork trail. Photo: Mike Kohn.



Echo Lake, on the Horse Camp Trail, Red Buttes Wilderness. Photo: Diana Coogle.

folks who want to use the swimming hole to check with him or the caretaker, Scott. One or the other is usually on site. Alcohol is prohibited.)

But a swim simply at Cantrall Buckley is lovely. The river is calm and lazy—good for swimmers and waders of all ages, either upriver, where there are rocks to climb over and wade around, or downriver, where the swimming is freer.

Miller Lake

With a macho four-wheel-drive vehicle, you can bump through the deep ford across Sturgis Creek on the gravel road to Miller Lake. Otherwise, walk five miles. This three-acre, 50-foot-deep natural lake, set among forested hillsides and enhanced by a small dam, is dark and cold without being icy. After a swim you can hike (steeply) to the top of the ridge for a splendid view of the close-up Red Buttes and the snowy beauty of distant Mt. Shasta.

Kettle Lake

About two miles up the Silver Fork trail, looking closely, you might spot, downhill to the left, Kettle Lake, barely

larger than a marshy pond. If it's a hot day and you're sweaty from hiking, it's well worth a scramble down the steep hillside for a little swim. The water is cool and fresh and adequately deep (maybe six to eight feet) beyond the marshy edges.

Azalea Lake

It's a six-mile hike to Azalea Lake, which is neither too big nor too small, has sweet-smelling azaleas along its edges, and is not too cold, either. The Knox Fire of 2017 marred both the trail and the lake environment, but it's still worth a swim.

Echo Lake

If you don't mind wading through mud, you can enjoy a little (very little) swim in the deeper part of Echo Lake, under a little rock cliff, with No Name Peak looming above you on the other side. The lake is on a short side trail slightly more than three miles up the very steep Horse Camp Trail. It's a lovely spot, even if you don't think it's worth the mud for the swim.

Diana Coogle
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Getting there

Carberry Creek swimming hole: Follow Upper Applegate Road south to the T junction at the end of the lake. Turn right onto Carberry Creek Road. Just past the bridge is a turn-out on the right next to an orange gate. Park there and walk maybe a quarter mile to the swimming hole.

For **Applegate Gorge**, **Echo Lake**, and **Emerald Pool**: From Applegate Lake, continue on Upper Applegate Road to the T-junction after the bridge. Turn left. Drive 1.5 miles and turn right on FS Road 1040.

The **Applegate Gorge** is about 3 miles down Road 1040, on the right.

Horse Camp Trail, to **Echo Lake**, is on the left, 3.9 miles from the turn onto Road 1040. To get to the trailhead for Middle Fork Trail, to **Emerald Pool**, go 5 miles down Road 1040 and turn right onto road 1035. The trailhead is 0.1 of a mile past the turn, on the left.

Applegate Lake (at Hart-Tish) and **Seattle Bar**: From Ruch, turn onto Upper Applegate Road and go to the T junction at the end the lake. Turn left and then, across the bridge, turn right into Seattle Bar (19.7 miles from Ruch). The swimming area at Hart-Tish Park on the Applegate Lake is 4.5 miles back down Upper Applegate Road towards Ruch.

McKee Bridge: On Upper Applegate Road, 7.3 miles from Hart-Tish Park on the Applegate Lake or 8.6 miles from Ruch.

Cantrall Buckley Park: Travel six miles from the Applegate Store towards Ruch on Highway 238, then turn right at Hamilton Road and in one-tenth of a mile another right onto Cantrall Road.

Miller Lake: At the green bridge over the Applegate River, take a left if you're coming from Medford, a right if from Grants Pass, onto Thompson Creek Road. Continue 13.1 miles to Sturgis Fork Road (Forest Road 1020) and turn right. At the Sturgis Creek crossing, the road becomes Forest Road 400. Park where the road meets Sturgis Creek. (Or drive it, if you dare!)

Kettle Lake: The Silver Fork trail to Kettle Lake is part of the Pacific Crest Trail. To get to the trailhead take Beaver Creek Road (Forest Service Road 20) to Silver Fork Gap, where you'll take Road 2025, towards Donamore Meadows. The PCT crosses the road. The Silver Fork part begins on the left.

Azalea Lake: Take Thompson Creek Road for approximately 11.9 miles. Turn left onto Carberry Creek Road for approximately two and one-half miles, where you'll turn right onto Forest Road 1030. Follow Road 1030 eleven miles, then turn right onto Forest Road 800 (a pretty rough road). In one-half mile you'll come to a large parking area located at the junction of Forest Roads 800 and 850. This is where the trail starts.



The swimming beach at Applegate Lake. Photo: Merri Stephens.

POETRY CORNER

Rain Has Fallen

A Prayer Poem

by H. Ní Aódagáin

Oh, blessed sweet manna of the sky, we've waited so long for you.
The hills and valleys sing your praises and all the creatures big and small,
from the furtive black bear to the delicate damselfly, bow to you in thanksgiving.

You've quenched our thirst, brought sustenance to leaf, grass, tree and field.
The birds spread their wings in joyous abandon as your cleansing waters pass
over them, flowers open their petals and the fruits of the garden rejoice in
your coming.

Oh, sacred water of the heavens, hear this prayer of gratitude.
Your coming has brought such joy.
May you be beckoned again and again by our humble appreciation.

■ COVID-19 IMPACT

Continued from page 1

and designs provided by a Grants Pass manufacturing business, feeds them into his 3-D printer, and in five hours produces a medically certified shield. He's produced about 50 so far.

Gary volunteered after Brad Converse, owner of the Grants Pass business, rallied engineers from throughout the Rogue Valley to design all kinds of equipment, from ventilator parts to filtration systems, then recruited people to turn these designs into reality. They're then distributed to local clinics and Asante Healthcare.

‘Paying It Forward’

Another Applegate resident, Meloney Quady, has been churning out another kind of face mask. She uses low-tech sewing rather than high-tech printing to create fabric masks.

“In times of stress, I have always turned to creating,” Meloney says. After hearing in mid-March about potential PPE shortages, she first donated all the N95 masks her family business had stored for fire season to the Asante Foundation.

That was no small donation: She and her husband Herb Quady had some 50 masks on hand for use by their Applegate Vineyard Management business during fire season. They doubled that by buying another 50 from a Medford pharmacy and donated them all to Providence. Another Applegate vineyard manager, Jason Cole, of Pacific Crest Vineyard Service, also donated N95s for use by healthcare providers.

Meloney first signed up for the Million Mask Challenge started by Providence Seattle, committing to sew 100 masks from surgical material provided by Providence. She was just getting started.

After joining Crafters Against COVID-19 out of Portland and Relief Crafters of America, she found a local Facebook group with a name that says what they do: Sewing Masks and Protective Gear. As of early May, the Rogue Valley group had nearly 900 members who have made more than 6,000 masks—plus caps, booties, ear savers, head bands, and even a few gowns.

Meloney published a pattern for a mask that fits comfortably over an N95 mask and helps extend the useful life of

the N95. She sewed day and night nearly every day for weeks. She also taught others how to make masks and connected them with other sewers, suppliers, and people in need.

Finally, she started a “Pay It Forward” program through her Etsy shop, sending a free mask to customers who promised to do a significant kindness to another who is not a family member or friend.

She's made more than 500 masks and sent them around the country, but mostly



Gary Conner with his 3-D printer and a brand new medical face shield. Photo: Tom Carstens.



At Applegate River Lodge, Janet Arseo (at right) serves two dinners to Lee, a local caregiver for an elderly, high-risk person sheltering in place. Photo: Cathy Rodgers.

to New York. Meloney said anyone in the Applegate who would like to help by making masks or donating supplies can let her know and she will connect them with people in need. Her email is mquart@mac.com.

“I think I would go insane if I wasn't doing this,” Meloney said. “I hate feeling helpless. This gives me hope, something positive to focus on, and something productive to be part of. It's what I can do to help, so I'm doing it.”

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The Applegater would like to share more stories of the generosity being shown in our valley. Please email your examples to Jeanette and we will post them on the Applegater Facebook page.

BOOK REVIEW

The Magical Language of Others: A Memoir

E.J. Koh

Tin House Books 2020

“Writing a poem, I came out of absolute darkness.”
—E.J. Koh

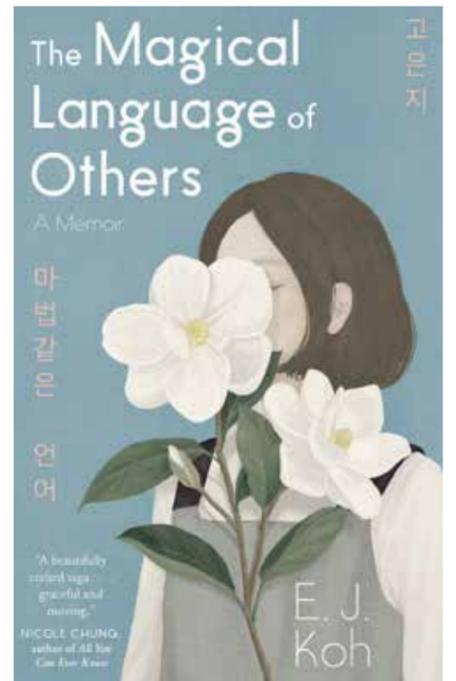
It is the first week of April as I begin to write this review, which will be published in June. With the rest of the world, I am at home. With the rest of the world, I don't know how the month of June will dawn. It comforts me that the whole world is, in one way or another, “at home” during this pandemic that draws all of us close at the same time that it leaves us almost infinitely alone.

Today, though, it comforts me that I am reading E.J. Koh's memoir for the second time and reflecting on this young Korean poet's lifelong search for her own home. A memoir doesn't require the author's long life for its success, but it does require a depth and width of experience in the writer's life so far. In this delicate, aching, articulate, beautiful book, Koh invites us to share her search, which began in adolescence when her parents moved to Korea for a better job, leaving her with her older brother, who was in college at Davis, California. Just like that, home disappeared.

“My first day, at fifteen, I awoke inside my old blanket, fooled into thinking that I was home. The room...[had a] stucco ceiling and a mirrored closet. I looked for [my mother] in every room. When I could not find her, I felt as if I would die” (12-13).

After nineteen months of absence, her mother's letters began to arrive from across the Pacific. Calling her daughter Eun Ji, her mother wrote in Korean, beautifully reproduced in the book, treasured and pondered over by her young daughter. “If her letters could go to sleep, my translations would be their dreams. The letters transport my mother to wherever I reside, so they may, in her place, become a constant dispensation of love” (xi). As with most humans, “Mommy” was Koh's first home and, for all she knew, her only possible dwelling place.

Over and over her memories batter her. Where does she fit? Will she find home, and if so, where? Her mother writes: “Don't be too sad. Mommy is sorry for leaving you so young. Until



the last of my life, Mommy's heart will ache....Eun Ji was crushed. Mommy's committed a grave (*sin*) against Eun Ji!” (139).

To find home, Koh travels sometimes to be with her mother and sometimes to escape her. She receives insight from experiences in Korea and Japan, studying dancing and languages. A teacher in Japan tells her, “Who will talk to you in Japanese again? Won't you feel so alone?...Your fate is to become a hunter—you will look for [the Japanese language] everywhere, anywhere you go. Your hunger will teach you what you've lost” (94).

In Korea Koh learns of that country's past and of her own ancestors. Of her time there she says, “Maybe I thought it was beautiful, the soft earth of that country, the sea breeze like sweet vinegar to soothe bitterness from my life because what harmed me did not appear to endanger the foggy trees, our sesame-oiled tongs, our coolheaded smiles” (138).

In what, then, does home consist? Maybe by June, all of us, sheltering at home, will have experienced home in ways we never before realized. Holding this book in my hands and reading it, I almost felt that by its ending I will have found my own answer through participating in Eun Ji's search.

The Magical Language of Others is available in the Jackson County Libraries, at Rebel Heart Books, on the Internet as an ebook, and at Audible, read by the author. Her own voice is an experience in itself, clear, almost childlike. Its very tone explains everything.

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Our Mission

The Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., provides the many rural and diverse communities of the Applegate Watershed with a communications vehicle, the *Applegater* newsmagazine, free of charge to all watershed residents. Our quarterly paper presents constructive, relevant, educational, and entertaining reports on a wide variety of subjects such as:

- natural resources
- ecology and other science information
- historical and current events
- community news and opinions

AVCN encourages and publishes differing viewpoints and, through the *Applegater* newsmagazine, acts as a clearinghouse for this diverse community. We are dedicated to working together with community members to maintain and enhance the quality of life that is unique to the Applegate Watershed.

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

Letters to the editor must be 200 words or less. Opinion pieces cannot exceed 500 words (no images). Articles cannot exceed 700 words. Obituaries are limited to 500 words and one photo. Essays and stories are limited to 500 words.

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

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

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

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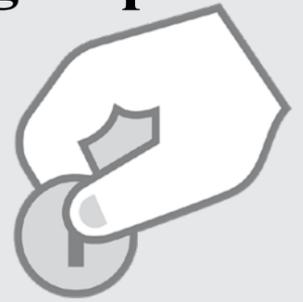
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Editorial Calendar

ISSUE	DEADLINE
FALL (Sept - Nov)	August 1 <i>Agriculture-Wine</i>
WINTER (Dec - Feb)....	November 1 <i>Holiday-Arts</i>
SPRING (March - May) ...	February 1 <i>Commerce-Community</i>
SUMMER (June - Aug)	May 1 <i>Environment-Fire-Recreation</i>

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Thanks to Lily Myers Kaplan, founder of the Spirit of Resh Foundation (reshfoundation.org) for her rainbow-over-the-Applegate photo, taken a couple springs ago on Highway 238 between Applegate and Ruch.

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COVID-19 content roundup

Just as the virus that causes COVID-19 has touched all aspects of our lives, it's part of many articles in the *Applegater*. Here's a list of stories where it plays a major part:

- Applegaters rally to help each other* 1
- COVID-19 disrupts fire season preparation* 1
- Forest restoration work continues—with adjustments* 1
- Paragliding event will return—sometime* 2
- Libraries offer online, front door pickup services*..... 6
- COVID Chronicles: Reflections on self-sufficiency* 6
- McKee Bridge Day postponed*..... 7
- A Greater Applegate postpones listening sessions*..... 7
- Area food banks offer help—and need help*..... 10
- Work goes on at closed Cantrall Buckley park* 10
- Voices of the Applegate reschedules spring concerts in fall* 10
- Pacifica open to strollers, but closed for events*..... 11
- School district copes with impact*..... 17
- Animal shelters adjust to closures* 17
- BizBits: Businesses adjust to COVID-19 impacts*..... 20
- COVID Chronicles: Life goes on at Whistling Duck Farm* 20
- Summer events at Applegate Lake cancelled* 21
- Ruch Outdoor School students go to "Learning Grids"* 22
- Applegate and Williams schools go to distance learning*..... 23

COVID Chronicles

Coping with the fact we're all part of a world-wide web

BY SCOTT WILSON



Scott Wilson,
aka Scotty Bones

If you could rewind the clock to February and imagine yourself making a shopping list for a disaster kit, what would have been at the top of the list? I bet toilet paper and hand sanitizer wouldn't have been #1 and #2! If you had done some contingency planning for different crisis scenarios, from local to regional to national, with different lengths of crisis considered, you may have included in your plan bartering in the absence of currency, communications without electronics, and boning up on backwoods skills.

Here in the greater Applegate watershed, we enjoy an abundance of open space, fresh water, and resources that those who live in towns and cities don't have ready access to. But the majority of us, even the modern backwoods hipster, are a far cry from being even remotely self-sufficient. The rural-urban interface is not only the subdivisions and malls

butting up against farms and orchards; it's also the supply chains that begin in towns and cities around the globe and snake their way through the valleys and up and down the roads and driveways of our rural landscape. An LCD flat screen made in South Korea, filled with liquid crystals grown in a lab in Germany, sits in a pole-framed home on a mountain top in Williams, while the TV's owner watches food preservation videos on YouTube, made and uploaded on a farm in Moldova, while video chatting with someone in Montevideo, Uruguay, with only one second of latency.

My name is Scott Wilson, known to some as Scotty Bones, and I've lived in Williams since 1997. I moved to southern Oregon with my wife and two tiny children to live a homestead life, with stability and health as two primary goals. Coming from the big city and watching tech, agribusiness, and so many other

booms and busts that I lost count, I was willing to sacrifice the 401(K) and mutual funds, career advancements, and bank accounts (for awhile!). I said goodbye to my potential meteoric rise and quietly shut the door behind me.

Williams, pre-Big Cannabiz, was an ideal place to not only build the homestead life, but equally important, realize the value of reducing the need to earn, while understanding my real connections to the greater world (phones, TVs, cars) and being ready to continue if they all went away. It wouldn't be easy, but it could be done. The only non-negotiable thing I figured I truly needed was money for property taxes!

In 2006 I wrote a book, tentatively titled *What To Do When The Shiz Goes Down: A Preparedness Philosophy*, as a personal manual and an homage to freedom from collapse. Then I shelved it. But recently I have been working with

Barbara Holiday, former editor of the *Applegater*, to edit and publish it electronically in June.

Toward the end of my book, I contemplated what type of scenario could cause a total shutdown of all travel globally and paralyze the economy. The only thing I could think of was what I called "a global epidemic of disease." When I read that, I realized that I needed to update and publish my book because what we are experiencing now is only a fraction of the breakdown our civilization could ultimately face. I can't sit by and let that happen.

Scott Wilson
macadog@hotmail.com,
ScottyBones.com

Have a story about living in a time of coronavirus pandemic you'd like to share with Applegater readers? Email no more than 700 words to bert@applegater.org.

Applegate and Ruch libraries continue to offer services

BY THALIA TRUESDELL

We have missed you! As your community centers for your intellectual and social needs, the Ruch and Applegate libraries are still here and gradually phasing in reopening. We do not know when, but we will come back together to learn, explore, and share stories again! Though our buildings are closed to the public at this writing in early May, we are offering Front Door Service, where patrons can pick up their holds.

Our hours remain the same, except Ruch Library now closes at 6 pm on Thursday, one hour early.

Rust never sleeps. While our doors are closed, know that staff members are working diligently behind the scenes creating virtual programming and planning for the summer and beyond.

Check out the Jackson County Library website, JCLS.org, to see all the digital resources available and our virtual programs. You can download movies, books and magazines and even learn a language. JCLS has a fantastic array of databases and online resources available to you.



No library card? Go online and sign up for an ecard, which allows you to access our digital collection.

We have been busy reconfiguring our usual Summer Reading Program for 2020. There will be Summer Reading for all ages this summer! Hooray!

There will be activities, incentives, and prizes. We are ordering new prize books, scheduling virtual programming, creating "Take and Make" kits for special activities at home, and researching other ways to keep the communities

and libraries connected during this difficult time.

We will reopen. We will have story times and programs and our very popular meeting rooms will no longer be empty. You will be able to read the newspaper, work on a puzzle, play with the train, or access the internet.

In the meantime, through our website, you can reserve books, movies, and magazines. You can download some of our digital offerings. Keep your imagination alive, because we will be back soon, and we can hardly wait!

Thalia Truesdell
Ruch Library Manager
ttruesdell@jcls.org, 541-899-7438

Trails association launches a free online document library

BY STUART HEASLET

To help citizens and organizations address issues about the preservation and management of public lands and wilderness areas in the region, the Applegate Trails Association (ATA) launched an online reference library containing reports, studies, government documents and other materials.

Available free of charge, ATA's reference library is online at applegatetrails.org/library. This library is the brainchild of David Calahan, ATA's founder and chairman.

NGO's (non-governmental organizations), local residents, and others are combining efforts to preserve the natural beauty and wilderness above our homes and valleys. These coalitions know that good environmental policy and management to preserve biodiversity and properly manage wildlands, recreation, and scenic views year after year is, simply, good business over the long run.

The library contains reference documents affecting the Klamath Siskiyou bioregion, straddling the Oregon-California border and stretching into the Applegate, Rogue, and Illinois valleys. Subjects include forest and ecosystem management, outdoor recreation, economic studies, business and property values, global climate change, pollution, and more.

AGA wants to support the efforts of the environmental, recreational, and business coalitions who understand that government must consider the full spectrum of wilderness, habitats, and human quality of life when managing public lands and that decisions need to be rooted in sound science and corresponding policy.

The reference library can assist with solid information and evidence to make the case.

Stuart Heaslet, Member
Save Wildlands Council
savewildlands.org

Sign up for free for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Since we launched Dolly Parton's Imagination Library last year, almost 2,000 Josephine County children up to five years old have begun receiving books in the mail each month at no cost to their families thanks to our sponsors.

Here's how to register your child at no cost:

1. Stop by your nearest library branch in Williams, Grants Pass, Illinois Valley, or Wolf Creek and fill out a paper registration form.
2. Visit josephinelibrary.org/get-involved/imagination-library/ and fill out the online registration form.

The first book every child receives is *The Little Engine That Could*, which is Dolly Parton's favorite book. The message of the book is timeless, encouraging children to never give up, do their best, and stay positive no matter what.

Sponsors for this program include AllCare Health, the four Rotary Clubs in Josephine County, Welch Investment

Group, Josephine County Library Foundation, and Oregon Community.

For more information, contact partnership manager Rebecca Stoltz at 541-476-057 ext. 108 or rstoltz@josephinelibrary.org.

Imagine your Story: 2020 Summer Reading Program

Visit josephinelibrary.org for information about the virtual Summer Reading Program and stay tuned for weekly raffles for all ages on the library's Facebook page: facebook.com/JosephineCommunityLibrary.

Need tech help?

The library is ready to answer technology questions over the phone from 1 - 6 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays and from 11 am - 4 pm Fridays. The library phone number is 541-846-7020.

The Williams branch of Josephine Community Library District is at 20695 Williams Highway, Williams.

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The Gater thanks you.

NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

AGA responds to COVID-19

BY SETH KAPLAN

Rereading the A Greater Applegate (AGA) article in the Spring *Applegater* reminds me again of how much our world has changed in such a short time. Back then, we were excited to share the schedule and early outcomes of our Neighborhood Listening Sessions. A few weeks later, most of us were practicing physical isolation—even more than we usually do in the Applegate! Things may have changed between the time this is written and you read it, but not everything. We will still have people living amongst us in need of support, and we will still have people willing to help.

AGA responded to COVID-19 by postponing our community meetings to an unknown future time. As much as we appreciate Zoom, FaceTime, and the rest, there is no substitute for gathering in community. We are anxious to get back to gatherings in neighborhoods and our business and nonprofit networks.

COVID-19 led us to make some significant changes in our work. We redesigned our community website, applegateconnect.org, so visitors can get daily updates on health from the Oregon Health Agency, on business and employment resources from the state and federal governments, and on our own community response. We will continue to use this site to inform the Applegate Valley on news about COVID-19, fire season, or anything else that comes our way.

AGA created a mutual aid network to connect people in need to people with resources. If you fall into either of these categories, you can sign up on applegateconnect.org through the Volunteer section or at agreaterapplegate.org on the home page. This mutual aid network is a useful resource for anyone who needs support from neighbors.

We were surprised at how many community groups were interested in using our Zoom teleconference resources. We hosted more than a dozen meetings for community groups in the first two weeks after the executive order to stay home. We later partnered with the Jackson County Library Services to offer free Zoom training and to provide three months of free Zoom service to any Applegate Valley organizations that participated.

AGA has worked with local farmers and ranchers to donate free meat and vegetables to the Ruch and Williams Food Pantries. We were proud to partner



Cathy Rodgers, A Greater Applegate board chair, presents a \$500 momentum grant to Joanna and Dusty Davis at the Applegate River Lodge to help cover the cost of the lodge providing free meals on Sundays, no questions asked. Photo: Janet Arseo.

with Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS), Ruch Country Store, Code 3, and Indigo Grill to promote a program to provide free lunches to youths 18 and under in the ROCS service area. We were excited to partner with Shelter-in-Plays to promote online local plays for donations, which raised significant funds for organizations and businesses stepping up in the time of COVID-19.

For AGA, this time has shed new light on issues that were already present in our idyllic valley long before COVID-19: lack of neighborhood- and valley-wide emergency preparedness plans; poor to nonexistent internet access; inequities in access to healthy food, housing, and reliable transportation to needed resources; and, for some, challenges in maintaining properties. AGA is committed to do what we can to support the Applegate Valley in this difficult time and in the difficult times that may continue for some of us.

This interest has led AGA to place a community impact insert in this edition of the *Applegater*. It includes a link to both a print version and an online survey that will help us understand how COVID-19 and the responses to it are impacting *you*. We know some people have lost jobs and others are busier than ever. Families are spending more time together, which can be a joy and a challenge, and some of us are more isolated than ever. Some people are worried about the future, and some are inspired by changes they are seeing. However you are feeling and to whatever degree you are being affected, we need to hear from you.

Thanks for contributing to A Greater Applegate for us all.

Seth Kaplan, Executive Director
A Greater Applegate
seth@agreaterapplegate.org

McKee Bridge Day postponed, but Creativity Contest is a go

BY LAURA AHEARN

McKee Bridge Historical Society has postponed McKee Bridge Day from June 14 to late summer, but the good news is that the Creativity Contest is going forward on schedule. The entry deadline has been extended to June 5, and winners will be announced on June 13.

Students in grades K-8 and equivalent ages can find an interesting story, person, item, or landmark that relates to the history of the Upper and Little Applegate valleys, from the Red Buttes to the Logtown area, for their creative project. They can present their ideas using any medium: an essay, drawing, model, song, or skit. They don't have to live in the Applegate to be a contestant. All students are welcome.

First place in each age group will win a cash prize! (Grades K-2, \$50; grades 3-5, \$75; and grades 6-8, \$100.)

Second and third places will receive McKee Bridge merchandise, such as T-shirts, tote bags, and baseball caps. All participants will receive a voucher for an ice cream treat at McKee Bridge Day.

Participants can email an electronic entry form to mckeebridge1917@gmail.com, or scan a drawing, video a skit, or type a story and save it as a .doc file. They can also snail-mail an entry to MBHS at 8595 Upper Applegate Road, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530.

Visit the McKee Bridge Historical Society Facebook page for more details about the Creativity Contest and to download the entry form. (A parent will need to sign the form—a “digital” signature agreeing to the terms, in an email, is fine). While you are there, please “like” MBHS and look over the research, photos, and resources about our community's past that we are archiving and sharing.

Our articles of incorporation spell out two purposes: To engage in the restoration and maintenance of

McKee Bridge and to promote historic preservation and restoration action of other historically significant sites in the area.

Even with stay-at-home orders during the pandemic, the MBHS Board has been working hard in both of these areas. The bridge is due for its next engineering inspection in 2021, with an anticipated cost of at least \$6,000. We are preparing an application for a Preserving Oregon matching grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) to help offset this expense. (Although Jackson County owns the bridge structure and adjoining land, MBHS is responsible for inspections and any required repairs in order to keep the bridge open for pedestrian use.)

As reflected in our Facebook posts, MBHS is researching, curating, and sharing the voluminous information about Upper and Little Applegate history that is tucked away in family scrapbooks, dusty library files, old newspapers, or courthouse records. To support this ongoing project and produce some tangible, permanent displays, we are developing a proposal for a SHPO Heritage Oregon grant. If you are a history buff, graphic artist, or computer geek who can help create maps and produce high-resolution layouts, your assistance would be greatly appreciated! Please email mckeebridge1917@gmail.com if you can help.

And for one last piece—well, *two* pieces—of good news: Two wonderful new logos designed for MBHS by local artist Whit Whitney, are coming soon on T-shirts! Make sure to get yours at McKee Bridge Day later in the summer.

Laura Ahearn

Mckeebridge1917@gmail.com



Local artist Whit Whitney designed new logos for the McKee Bridge Historical Society. Signed T-shirts with the new designs will be available at McKee Bridge Day later in the summer.

Food pantry thanks supporters, offers help

Summer is here, and so are we! We say “thanks” to our generous donors and all the Upper Applegate community. We have had tremendous support from our friends and neighbors that allowed us to stay open during this pandemic.

To our wonderful volunteers, we say we are humbled and so appreciative for your loyalty and hard work.

If you are in need of help, feel free to come by and see us at Ruch Outdoor Community School, by the cafeteria at 156 Upper Applegate Road.

We are open on Mondays from 11:30 to 1 pm. Any questions? Feel free to contact us.

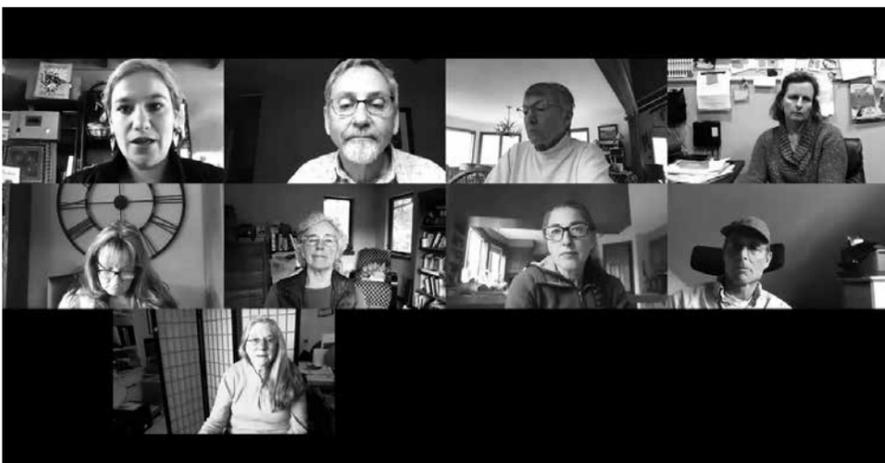
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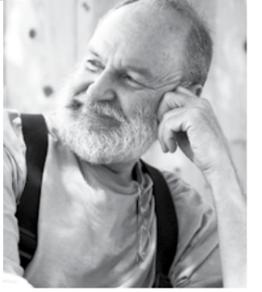


A screenshot shows an Applegate Nonprofit Network meeting in progress via Zoom. AGA has moved its nonprofit and business meetings online while we practice physical isolation.

THE STARRY SIDE

Summer 2020: The absence of people

BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells

The general absence of people in public places this spring has had a dramatic effect. Big things, like air quality, have improved. Our water is cleaner. Animals and nature's other beauties have been given a break from our various good and not-so-good effects.

It's a moment to muse on what we do to the world around us. We have acted mostly carelessly, without much thought. We say we throw things away, but we can see now that there is no "away." Things go somewhere and do something, usually something pretty ugly, annoying, and maybe even poisonous. In nature there

is no "away" or waste or anything like it. Spent leaves that fall are good fuel for the next season, the next generation, the other neighbors in nature's community.

As we discover the consequences of our wasted things and understand them better, we see more and more clearly the harm we have done. Maybe we could shift to a waste-less social framework that designs things the way nature does, uses things efficiently the way nature does, feeds others, and reuses—as nature does so well.

If you have a moment, in your evening, for musing, go outside, get comfortable, and look up. You can find some easy old

friends up in the sky. One is the summer triangle. The harp, Lyra, with the bright star Vega, is up in the east, getting higher and higher in the sky, pushing spring's favorites into the west and pulling up his two partners in the triangle from the east. He's also bringing up the Milky Way, with all its stars.

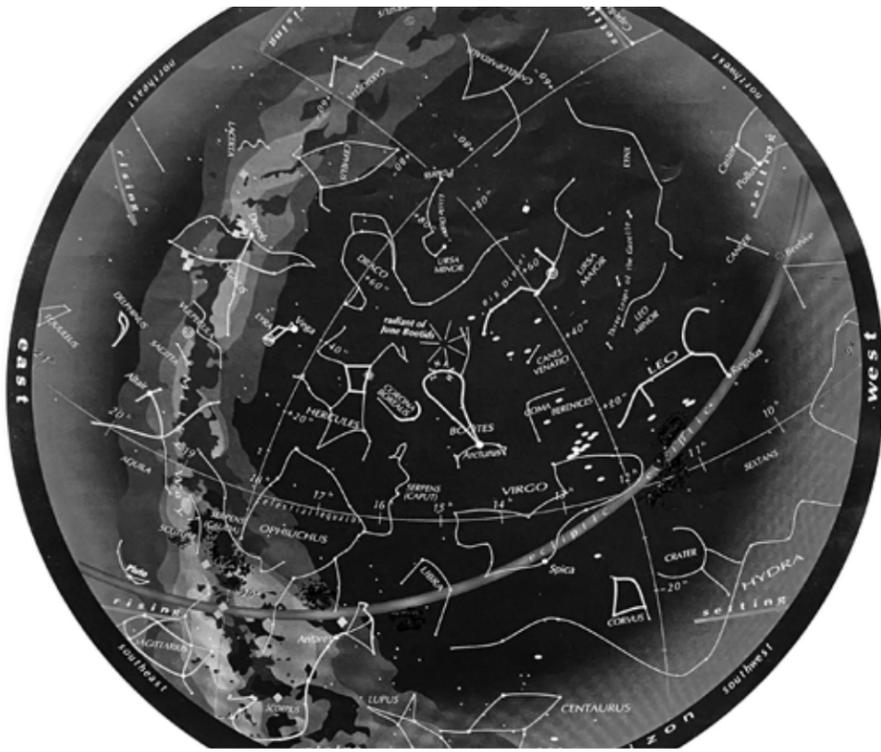
Below, to the northeast, is the bright Deneb, the top of the Northern Cross, or Cygnus the Swan. The end of the swan's small tail is the top of the cross as she flies south. To the east-southeast and last to rise is the three-in-a-row pattern that makes up Aquila, the Eagle, with Altair, the bright star in the middle. The triangle starts in the east on its side, and by the time it

sets in the west, it's beautifully and religiously straight up, as the cross should be, sitting upright on the horizon line. Quite cool.

Do you know you can see the stars of the next season in this season's early mornings? I've been watching for them and seeing them for months now. It's a fun sneak peak into the future. Near the end of summer, fall's constellations begin to show themselves. They're fun to see if you can steel yourself to be awake to notice some early morning moments of sky. This works for all four seasons.

Greeley Wells
greeley@greeley.me

Guy Ottewell's Astronomical Calendar.



Of Note

Mercury, ever mercurial, is in the dusk in June and the dawn in July. It disappears in August!

Venus, who has been at her brightest for a long time now, is sinking below the horizon in June only to rise in the pre-dawn mornings, higher and higher. She'll be losing much of her brightness with this change.

Mars has been growing stronger and is now back, and, as usual, is hard to find but for his red color. He stays consistently in the early morning all three months.

Jupiter is in the morning sky in June, up all night in July, and moving to the evening sky in August.

Saturn does the same as Jupiter—part of the team but much dimmer!

Meteor showers

Delta Aquariids, July 27-30, avoid the moon by letting it set before they can be observed. These are dim, medium-speed meteors that go on for long beyond the dates given, with no real peak day. The maximum rate the Delta Aquariids can reach is 15 - 20 per hour.

The Perseids, my favorite, are best between August 11 and 12. But there's a moon to contend with. They're worth a watch, anyway, as they are the best of the year, especially if you can avoid the moon. Rated fair.

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Burn reminder

Before burning any time of year, check with your fire district to make sure that day is an official burn day and not a **NO** burn day.

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DIRTY FINGERNAILS AND ALL

No space, no problem—the sky’s the limit

BY SIOUX ROGERS



Sioux Rogers

So you have absolutely no space to plant even a weed or the soil available is awful. *No problem!* You have plenty of space but have already filled it to the max. *No problem!*

Container gardening, with any sort of container, is fun, creative, portable, and allows specific needs of each plant to be customized for the resident plant. Put on your creative gardener’s cap and expand your growing space, up and out. Sky’s the limit.

Getting started you will need to follow a few basics, actually the same as you would if planting an in-ground garden. Check the specific planting needs for each item you want to grow. Follow the tips listed below and all will be fine.

1. Do not mix sun-loving plants with shade lovers in the same container.
2. Do not put a plant with an unquenchable need for water with a plant that hates much water.
3. If using a small container, make sure roots have enough wiggle room.
4. Keep the soil in each container specific to the exact needs of its plants.

Before the fun begins, disclaimer in place: This little article will not explain what to plant, what type of soil to use, how to plant, or how to

drill holes, hammer nails, water or feed plants. This sweet but short “chat” is happening because I did over-plant and I did run out of space! Fortunately, I had an ah-ha moment. I remembered I could plant just about anything anywhere, in any direction, horizontal or vertical, without a care. This monumental achievement is made possible by using pallets, gutters, and sewer pipes, often free or very inexpensive. A new adventure may be coming your way! Think outside the invisible box.

It’s time to go skyward, my friend, up and out. So far, still plenty of room up there. Vertical and horizontal garden planting is simply a geometric referral to the placement of the container(s): up and down or side by side and which way what is growing.

By allowing your plants to grow up and out instead of spreading on the ground, they have far more room to produce vegetables. This also leaves a very small footprint.

If you decide to use pallets for a new garden, you will need to make them plant friendly. Staple some landscape material to the back and the inside of the front, which may be a little awkward. Fill the entire pallet with the excellent soil, appropriate for what you are planting. On the side where the plants are to be placed, cut slits in the fabric. If this will be a hanging pallet, make sure you have very strong hooks, as it will be very heavy. Best if you hang the pallet after it is lined but before adding soil.

Some information about pallets. All pallets are not created equally. Most are safe but some older pallets may have been treated with a very bad chemical, methane bromide. It is very toxic. Those pallets will have a “MB” stamp somewhere on the edge. If you see the letters “CH” it is from China and best to avoid. If you see the letters “US” or “CA” those are safe to use. Best to avoid painted pallets as you have no idea of the paint’s toxicity.

PVC pipes are excellent for planting either vertically or horizontally. For

instance, a 12”-circumference PVC pipe with 6” holes drilled at intervals can be hung vertically or horizontally. Whichever way, make sure it is fastened securely, as it will be a holy mess if it falls.

For wonderful ideas and instructions on making a horizontal or vertical garden use the following in your search engines: vertical gardening,

horizontal gardening, planting in PVC pipe, pallet gardening. Ideas range from wild and wonderful to stable but silly.

Garden for peas of mind and lettuce us be thankful,
Sioux Rogers
dirtyfingernails@fastmail.fm



Untreated pallets make economical planters. Photo: rebeccasbirdgardensblog.blogspot.com.



Vertical gardens pack in more plants without expanding the garden’s footprint. Photo: countryliving.com.



No room to spread out? Spread up! Photo: familyhandyman.com

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Plans proceed for fall celebration

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

Spring has been happening for the wildflowers and wildlife at the park. The park rangers and park hosts have been taking good care of the site and preparing it for public use again.

A time like this reminds us just how important this county park is to our community. We all have missed it, but it's great to be able to use it again with safe distancing for awhile.

In March, ten hazard trees were removed in picnic areas, creating new stumps. The county is removing dead and dying trees, but visitors should always watch for dead debris and any dead leaning trees when hiking in the park.

The park enhancement team will be rescheduling work days and the

resumption of work projects. Watch for announcements to volunteer for cleanup, weeding, and mulching in areas of the park or contact Janis at janis.agapark@gmail.com.

We are hoping to hold our planned park celebration and dedication ceremonies for donors and artists, so *save the date*—September 26. You are all invited. When we get clearance to plan and schedule a large group event, we will post the details in the fall *Applegater*, on flyers in the communities, and at applegateconnect.org. This promises to be a very exciting time of bringing community back together, and what a perfect place to celebrate!

Janis Mohr-Tipton
janis.agapark@gmail.com
541-846-7501



A sculpture by Jacksonville artist Cheryl D. Garcia of a Henderson's Shooting Star near the entrance to Cantrall Buckley Park accompanied by a new interpretive sign designed by Gregg Payne featuring identification, educational information, artist's statement, and community donors who supported the sculpture's installation.



A depiction of a Northern Flicker perches on a tree nearby an interpretive sign with information about the species. Artist Cheryl D. Garcia is expected to be on hand at the park celebration planned for September 26.
Photos: Janis Mohr-Tipton.

Voices of the Applegate

Spring concerts rescheduled for the fall

BY JOAN PETERSON

Our spring concerts were canceled because of the COVID-19 virus, as were so many concerts and performances this year. We were almost ready to perform with only two more rehearsals to go in March when the virus hit and everything closed down. But coming this fall, we are picking up where we left off and have moved our spring concerts to the fall season.

Choral selections will include songs in English, Latin, and Spanish. There will also be songs performed by ensembles: a duet, a solo, and pieces played by



Voices of the Applegate has rescheduled its spring concerts for the fall.
Photo: Kathy Escott.

saxophone and piano. Music music music is the theme, celebrating all of its beauty, romance, love, and power.

Voices of the Applegate, under the direction of Shayne Flock, will begin rehearsals on September 1 at the Ruch library meeting room at 6:30 (the remaining rehearsals will begin at 7 pm, as we will have half an hour for registration on September 1). Rehearsals end at 8:30 pm. No audition is required.

The concerts will be performed the week before Thanksgiving, the first one in Jacksonville, on Friday, November 20, at 7 pm at the Old Presbyterian Church, 405 California Street, and the second one in Applegate on Sunday, November 22, at 3 p.m. at the Applegate Lodge, 15100 Highway 238 in Applegate.

Hand sanitizers will be available at both venues. Refreshments will be available at the Applegate performance. There will be no admission charge, but we readily accept donations.

Joan Peterson
541-846-6988

Roving Reporter

COVID-19: How can boomers help?

BY TOM CARSTENS

"As sickness is the greatest misery, so the greatest misery of sickness is solitude" (John Donne, 17th century English poet).

Being cooped up to avoid a pandemic is certainly nothing new to humankind. We might not be as miserable as those sequestered medieval plague victims, but it's no picnic. But even worse than solitude, to my mind, is the feeling of utter helplessness when so many need help. Lending a hand in the physical sense is pretty tough for us boomers, since we're deemed to be especially vulnerable to the ravages of this virus.

Helping out *vicariously* is possible, however, through our local charitable nonprofits, many of which are well suited to funnel our contributions to the folks who need it most. Right now.

"For now I ask no more than the justice of eating." (Pablo Neruda).

We can't go wrong with food pantries. With so many folks out of work, food security is a major concern. Our local food pantries are hiring staff and working in overdrive. Their immediate need, surprisingly, isn't our individual grocery drop-offs. Most food pantries already have donor food sources, like grocery outlets and local farms, and the Oregon Food Network supplies provisions in bulk for pennies on the dollar. This system enables most food banks to get substantially more food out of a financial contribution than is possible with small donations of groceries. So, because of the high demand for their services right now, they desperately need cash donations.

In Jackson County one of the major players in charitable food distribution is ACCESS, which operates thirteen pantries in the Rogue Valley. One services the Applegate Valley. It's located at the Ruch Outdoor School, 190 Upper Applegate Road, where food is distributed on Mondays from 11:30 am to 1 pm. They also offer an expanded distribution schedule at two sites in Medford. People who need to supplement their pantries can find more information on the ACCESS website, accesshelps.org, or by calling 541-779-6691. The ACCESS website also lists other nonprofits that operate their own food banks in Jackson County. To help out with a financial contribution, we can find all the information we need on the website. ACCESS will let us earmark our donations to help with utility bills or rental payments if we'd prefer.

The Josephine County Food Bank operates nine food pantries throughout the

county including one in Williams, which is located at the the Williams Community Church, 228 East Fork Road. Food is distributed there on Tuesdays from 10 am to noon. The JoCo Food Bank partners with several organizations that help with food supply. The charity also owns the Raptor Farm, which produces 20 tons of fresh produce annually. More information, including how to donate, can be found on their website, jocofoodbank.org, or by calling 541-479-5556.

Another enterprising food pantry is the Medford-based Gleaning Network, which partners not only with grocery stores but also with local businesses, such as Silly Zack's Bakery. This nonprofit is looking to expand its membership to keep up with the soaring demand. Like other food pantries, Gleaning Network "asks no questions" when distributing food to those who are struggling. More information can be found on their website, thegleaningnetwork.org, or by calling 541-665-1500.

For broader help for those experiencing distress due to job loss during this crisis, there is a host of other nonprofits that are helping out. For example, United Way of Jackson County (unitedwayofjacksoncounty.org) is partnering with 23 other organizations to address 12 core areas imperiled by economic loss due to the pandemic, including housing and rent assistance, child care, and transportation. This organization is meeting this emergency by pledging to apply donations within 24 hours of receipt and will honor specific donor requests, including for Josephine County charities.

St. Vincent de Paul of Medford is another broad-based charity that is helping with free bag lunches, grocery bag distribution, rent assistance, and utility bills. To contribute to their efforts, please check out their website, stvincentedpaulmedford.info, or call 541-772-3828.

"We only have what we give" (Isabel Allende).

In the end, though, we should consider supporting any charitable cause with which we are familiar and comfortable. Since the effects of this economic disaster are likely to be long lasting, we can anticipate that our neighbors' needs will continue even after our economy opens up again. And by helping our neighbors, we'll feel a lot less miserable.

Tom Carstens
541-846-1025



The ACCESS food box assembly line. Food is distributed at the Ruch Outdoor School on Mondays.
Photo: ACCESS.

Pacifica in a time of COVID-19

BY GERI LITTLEJOHN

I'm writing this at Pacifica on May Day, 2020.

It's a beautiful day. The sun is shining. The fragrant garden is blooming, the pollinator garden is filling out, and everything is verdant. The birds are singing—so many varieties of birds! People are enjoying the trails on foot or horseback. I hear the drone of lawn mowers and weed eaters. I'm keenly aware of how dry it is underneath the surface and the coming perils of this early fire season. Everything has changed. And nothing has changed.

In the past, activity at Pacifica was predictable, based on the seasons. Every spring we would gear up for school programs, review curriculums, coordinate with teachers at over 25 schools, and hire staff: for the Caterpillar, for field trips, and for PODS (Pacifica's Outdoor School Program). This year, no buses came to Pacifica. The air wasn't filled with the voices of thousands of students exploring the beauty and diversity of the property while learning about conservation and natural sciences.

In other years, the maintenance crew would be taking care of the land and the buildings in preparation for hosting parties of friends and families celebrating weddings, dancing all night, or gathering as community to sip cider, eat food, listen to music. There are no gatherings, yet the maintenance goes on. The costs of maintaining a large property and paying the expenses associated with the land

continue. Early into the period of social distancing, the board agreed that it was important to keep the property open, so people could continue to tend to their physical, emotional, and spiritual health by being outside, moving their bodies, and connecting with nature at Pacifica.

So much of the programming that happens at Pacifica depends on the gathering of people. Yet we are more than our programming. Pacifica is the land and all that happens on it. Pacifica itself exists as a place to be loved, appreciated, and tended by humans.

During this time the biggest revelations to me as board chair have been the deepening relationship with the land itself, a recognition of what a resource it is for a community to have access to a large property teeming with life (even when no people are present), and an appreciation of how many people love this place, as we on the board do.

In the time of COVID-19, it was necessary to create a new budget in which usually predictable revenues were zeroed out—no schools in session, no field trips. Couples are cancelling weddings because family members don't have the financial resources to travel. In one sense this is a time of great uncertainty. But the land is steady, constant.

This spring, Pacifica's board scheduled a series of volunteer days later in the year for a deeper engagement with the organization and the land. We envision joyous work



The Pacifica pollinator garden continues to buzz, unlike the rest of the grounds during a quiet, socially isolating time. Photo: Geri Littlejohn.

parties helping with trail maintenance, building and installing more bird boxes, beautifying the old post office. We look forward to being able to call you together in service to this nurturing place again. We look forward to being able to host events in celebration of community, the arts, and education again.

Until then, we invite you to enjoy the beauty of this place, to tune into the changes on the land with the turning of the seasons. If you come for a sunset stroll, you might hear native flute music in the air. We invite you to leave donations on site or online. We invite you to help us with projects that can be done solo or safely with one or two

others. If you are interested, please call Ray Prag at 541-846-1100.

We cannot predict what the future holds. In this present moment, we invite you to deepen your relationship with Pacifica as a special place, to think about what it means as a community gathering place, to come here, to be present, and to see it as a place where you are welcomed and needed.

We hope to gather with you again en masse at the Harvest Faire. Let's all hold that thought together.

Gerri Littlejohn, Board Chair
Pacifica: A Garden in the Siskiyou
geri@pacificagarden.org

Forest service gets ready for fire season in the Siskiyou Mountains

BY ANNE TRAPANESE

The Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District (SMRD) is presently preparing for the upcoming fire season. To protect employees against COVID-19, SMRD

has conducted risk assessments and implemented mitigations for the onboarding process.

As of early May, SMRD fire crews

were minimally staffed for five days a week. When at full capacity, SMRD will have two engines with thirteen firefighters and two fire prevention folks. ODF announced the beginning of fire season on May 1, which is an uncommon shift from the usual June start date.

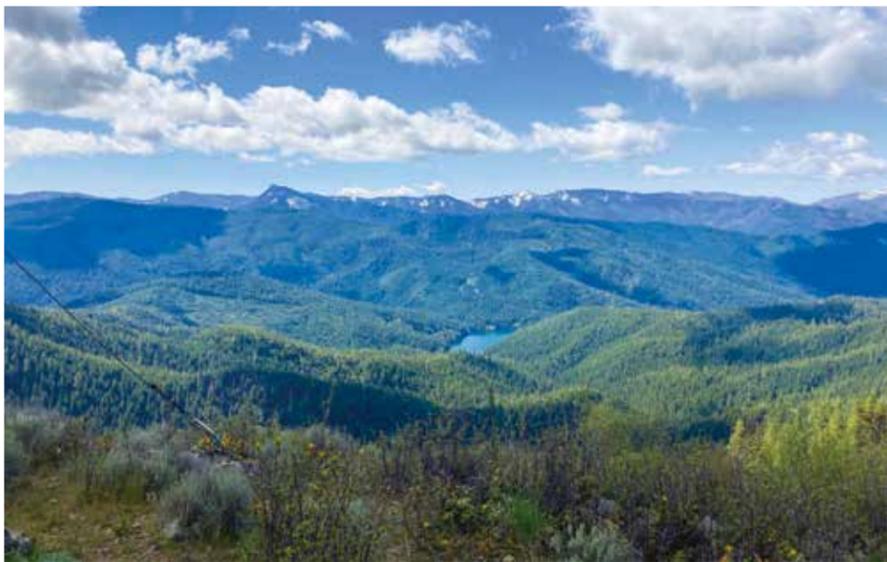
The Applegate Basin is showing 50 percent of normal snow-water equivalent. The SMRD fire crew typically shifts to seven-day coverage in June, but weekly coverage could occur sooner if drier conditions persist.

Additionally, due to COVID-19, the Rogue-Siskiyou National Forest made the decision to suspend all burning this spring because of the increased risk to the public and employees from smoke. The forest will plan fuels treatments for the fall season as appropriate. Despite a short season, over the winter and spring the district completed approximately 700 acres of pile burning and 70 acres of under-burning.

The Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District asks that you please be particularly careful with fire this summer if you are recreating on public lands. The Forest Service has received direction to do everything they can to catch fires when they are small. Please make an extra effort to prevent human starts, so that SMRD firefighting resources are available for unpreventable lighting starts.

SMRD is closed to the public as of this writing in early May, but our phone line is open for messages. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at 541-899-3800. We are checking our messages two times a day and promise to get back to you promptly. All fires should be reported by dialing 911 and providing clear information on the location of smoke.

Anne Trapanese,
Environmental Coordinator
Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
atrapanese@fs.fed.us



The view from the fire lookout on Squaw Peak. Fire season started May 1, unusually early. Photo: USFS.

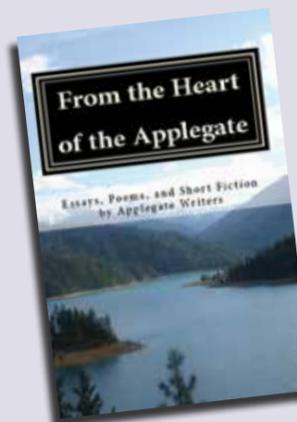
WANTED: GATER AID

The *Applegater* needs your help raising funds to keep the *Gater* going, appearing for free in mailboxes throughout the Applegate watershed.

Join our fundraising committee now—contact Diana Coogler at diana@applegater.org or 541-846-7447—and help us raise the necessary funds to continue publishing the *Applegater*.

We welcome your help, energy, ideas and organizational skills!

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Williams Creek restoration project set for this summer

BY KEVIN SWEENEY

A small dam appears every spring on Williams Creek, half a mile upstream of its confluence with the Applegate River. The push-up dam, installed in April and removed in October, diverts water into the Lower Bridgepoint Irrigation Ditch.

Like hundreds of small dams across the Rogue River basin, it relies on an approach used in Oregon since the 19th century. While these types of dams work for farmers, they can interfere with fish migration. And there are newer, easier ways to get the job done.

This summer, the Williams Creek dam will come down and be replaced by a system that conserves water for agriculture, reduces work for irrigators, and enables fish passage. The project is led by the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council (APWC).

When the current push-up dam is built each spring, the creek rises and meets the entrance to the irrigation ditch. At that point, some of the creek water flows into the ditch for agricultural use. This approach can restrict fish access to quality habitat and increases upstream water temperatures. It also causes problems for irrigators —water in their ditch is lost through seepage and evaporation. And building and removing the dam year after year leads to streambank erosion.

“People see a push-up dam that might only be three feet tall, and they assume salmon can get past,” said Janelle Dunlevy, APWC’s Executive Director. “While that may be the case with adult fish, juvenile migration is greatly restricted. And that can reduce fish stocks in later years.”

Removing the dam will enhance access to dozens of miles of habitat. Williams Creek is nowhere near that long, but it splits into multiple forks, each with small tributaries containing viable habitat. Chinook and Coho salmon, lamprey, and steelhead will have better access into the creek.

With the dam removed, a roughened channel will be constructed to raise the streambed enough to let a newly installed headgate divert water for local farms. The new system can draw water at a wide range of flows. When irrigation season starts, the headgate is opened with the twist of a knob, diverting water into a new irrigation pipeline. Water flow in the stream continues uninterrupted.

The buried pipeline will replace the open ditch, reducing water loss. A headgate screen prevents fish from entering the pipeline.

The solution will save irrigators time and money. They will no longer need to install, maintain, and remove the dam each year and won’t need to regularly clear out the irrigation ditch, processes that can take several days.

Key partners include Whistling Duck Farm and Blue Fox Farm, two organic

farms that rely on water from the Lower Bridgepoint Irrigation Ditch.

“We knew these two farms would be great partners,” said Julie Cymore, APWC Fish Passage Program Manager. “They had already taken steps to make their irrigation more efficient and invested in piping where seepage appeared to be the greatest.”

“At first, I wasn’t sure about this because I thought it might end up like a big irrigation project,” said Chris Jagger of Blue Fox. “But when we started expressing what we wanted, it was clear that they listened. They understood we’re working farmers here and took that into account. Whatever we did had to work for the farms as well as the fish.”

Public funding for the project’s design and implementation came from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW), and the US Fish & Wildlife Partners Program. Private funding came from American Rivers, Rogue Basin Partnership, and the Open Rivers Fund, a project of Resources Legacy Fund supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

“The Medford District BLM fisheries biologists and hydrologists have also been great partners,” said Dunlevy. “They’re good at what they do, and they’ve been very helpful.”

This project builds on riparian restoration work APWC has implemented on the banks



Even though the dam is only three feet high, it can trap juvenile fish. Photos: APWC.



A reconstructed roughened channel near Talent that’s similar to what’s planned for Williams Creek.

of the Applegate River and Williams Creek and on the community planning they have participated in for the Provolt Special Management Recreation Area.

Kevin Sweeney
Freelance writer for APWC
contact@apwc.info

Kevin Sweeney is an environment writer and consultant based in Northern California.

Changing faces of the Applegate Partnership

BY BARBARA SUMMERHAWK

The faces of the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council (APWC) will be two-dimensional for the COVID-19 duration: Zooming board meetings, Skyping consultations over the distances, and relying on email and messaging as this new era of uncertainty brings a change in staff and in approaches to current projects.

Jakob Shockey, a solid, three-dimensional presence in the APWC’s office and out in the field around the valley for seven years, is moving on to new opportunities. As of April 1, Jakob, who headed many riparian

restorations during his tenure with APWC, will focus on his passion for promoting beavers on the landscape as an important process for restoring and maintaining ecosystem resiliency and water security. He is heading up The Beaver Coalition (TBC), a new non-profit organization that will work to enable humans to partner with beavers through education, science, advocacy, and process-based restoration: work which the APWC looks forward to cooperating on. “The APWC will miss Jakob’s passion, energy, and dedication to riparian restoration work in the valley,” said Geoff Becker, APWC Board Member.

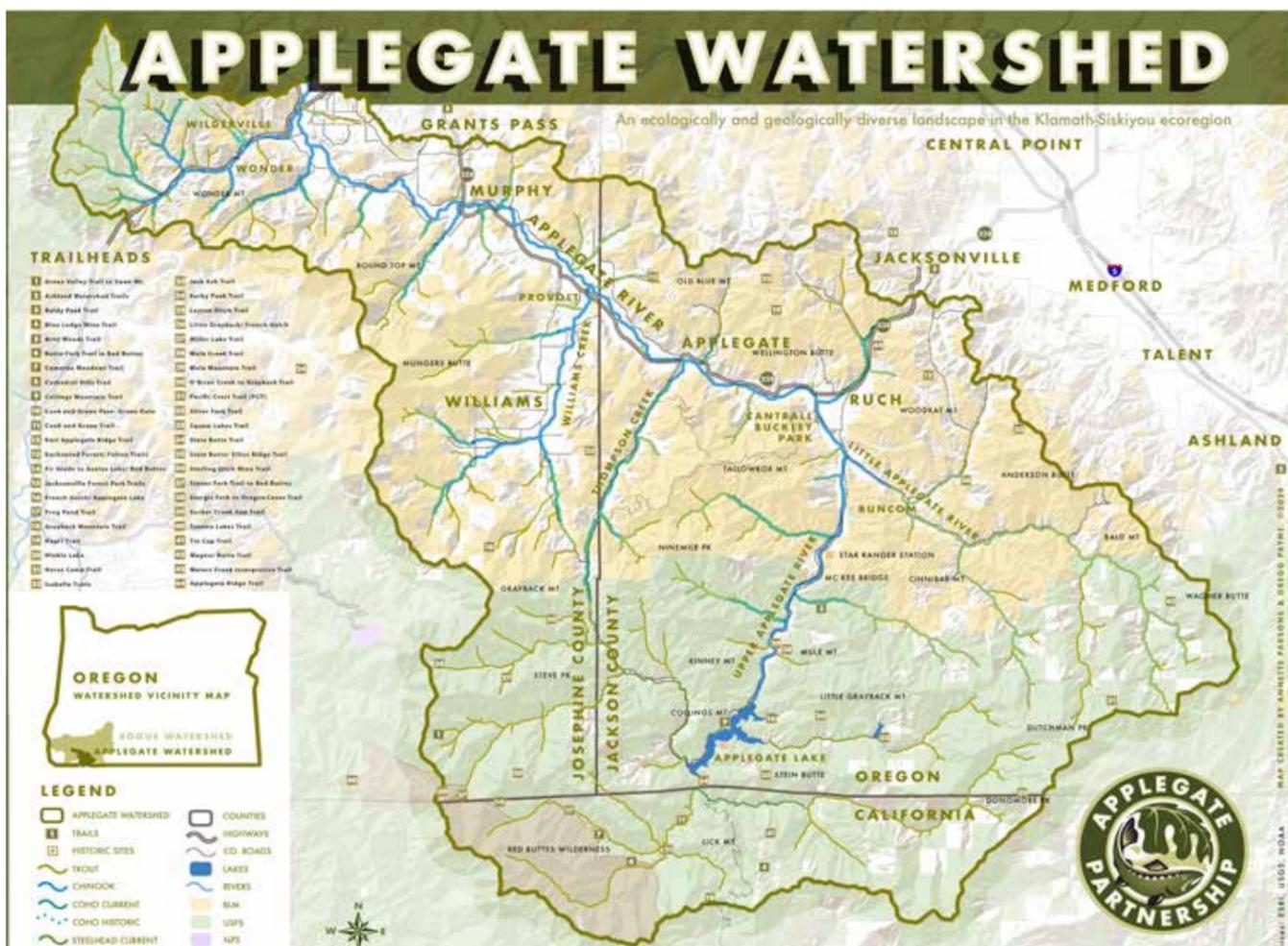
The new face joining the APWC as our Habitat Restoration Project Manager will be Nathan Gehres, a local from Humbug Creek who has had considerable experience with field work after his graduation from Oregon State University. He has also previously worked with Oregon State University and the US Forest Service in the area. This is his second employment with the APWC. His first was as a seasonal employee at the beginning of his career path. Nathan comments that after having spent over twenty years in the field of ecology, he has “become more and more concerned by the changes I see occurring throughout the

landscape, especially in my home region of the Applegate Valley, a place of rich biological diversity that is very close to my heart. I look forward to the opportunity to help maintain and restore this area in whatever way I can. I also am excited to work again with the people of the Applegate Valley, perhaps the area’s greatest resource.”

Other new “faces” of the APWC are the newly updated logo of the APWC and a grand, informative map of the Applegate that will be on permanent display in Cantrall Buckley Park and available in print in the future. The snappy new logo and map were designed by Gregg Payne. The map features the landscape of the Applegate Watershed with features marking historical sites, hiking trailheads, fish-bearing streams, and points of interest in the valley. We would like to thank Annette Parsons for her incredible GIS skills which provided us with the raw data to turn into the map.

The APWC fish passage and riparian restoration projects will continue, along with our educational and outreach activities, even in our time of distancing. We look forward to meeting online and developing new relationships with The Beaver Coalition, local nonprofit organizations, and community members across the watershed until and at such time meetings of like minds can take place face to face in the watershed again.

Barbara Summerhawk
APWC Board Member
contact@apwc.info



Annette Parsons’ work laid the groundwork for Gregg Payne’s design for a new Applegate watershed map which will be available in print.



Gregg Payne designed the new Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council logo.

Enjoy lakes and conifers on the way to Steve's Peak

BY EVELYN ROETHER

There is much to enjoy on this hike—a swimmable lake, a pleasant hike up to a ridge overlooking the peaks of the Red Buttes Wilderness, and some notable botanical wonders. When Oliver Mathews (a self-taught dendrologist with a passion for Oregon's trees) got here in 1931, he found half of Oregon's 35 conifer species within a six-mile radius of the lake.

Trail to Miller Lake and Steve's Peak

• **Difficulty:** To Miller Lake—Easy. To Steve's Peak Ridge—Moderately difficult.

• **Distance:** To Miller Lake—1.4 miles round-trip. To Steve's Peak Ridge—3.9 mile (loop).

• **Elevation gain:** To Miller Lake—390 feet. To Steve's Peak Ridge—795 feet.

• **Access:** June - October.

• **Map:** Grayback Mountain USGS quad.

Directions

Take Highway 238 to the town of Applegate. Go south on Thompson Creek Road for 11.9 miles until the pavement ends at a four-way intersection. Continue straight on Road 1020, paralleling Sturgis Fork Creek for 4.5 miles. Then go straight/left at the junction on Road 400 for 3.5 miles until it ends at the trailhead.

A high clearance 4WD vehicle is *required* due to a rugged low water crossing on Road 400, 3.8 miles from the trailhead. This crossing is impassable during high flows.

Trail description

From the parking area follow the rhododendron-lined trail as it ascends to Miller Lake. Located in a deep glacial cirque, Miller Lake is about three acres in size. Although it was modified with an earthen dam in the early 1900s to provide irrigation to the downstream Thompson Creek water users, the lake retains its natural characteristics. It is especially beautiful when the lake water is high in early summer and wildflowers are at their peak.

To continue on the loop trail up to the ridge, turn right when you reach the lake. Soon you will encounter the first of several botanical curiosities: a stand of large "weeping" Brewer's spruce. Recognizable by its droopy branches, this tree is one of the rarest spruces on the continent. It is found only in the Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains of southwest Oregon and northwest California.

Continuing uphill through magnificent stands of old-growth fir trees and wildflower-strewn meadows, keep an eye out below for the crescent shaped Upper Miller Lake. More a pond than a lake, it is surrounded



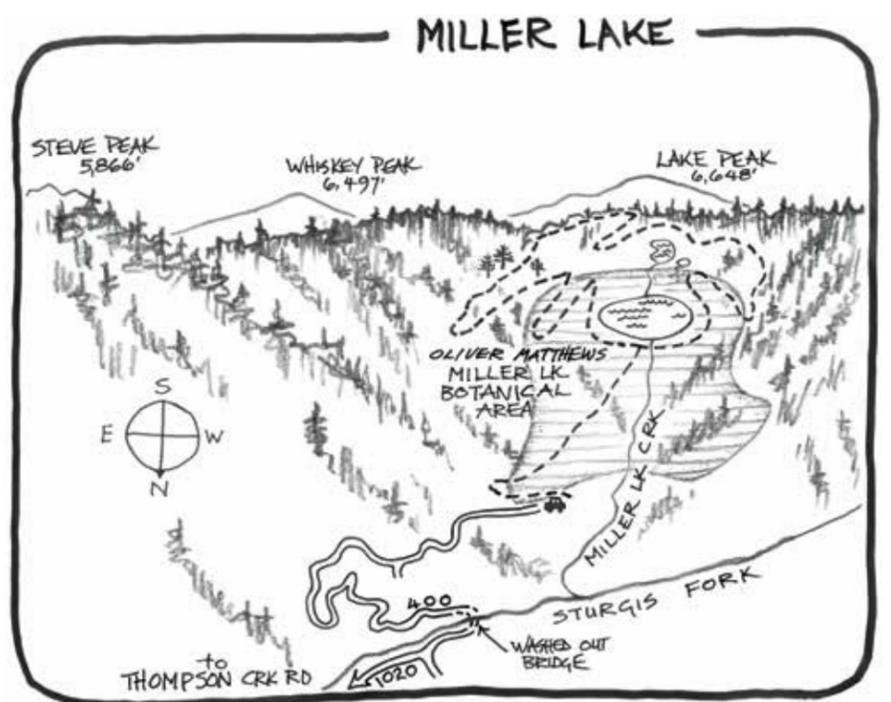
Miller Lake is about three acres in size. Photo: Evelyn Roether.

by yellow flowering sneezeweed and covered with water lilies that flower in mid July.

As the trail switchbacks up to the ridge, the vegetation changes: the understory is now comprised of two rare oak species: Sadler and oracle. The oracle oak is a rare hybridization of the interior live oak and California black oak. The Sadler oak is endemic to this ecoregion. Overhead, red fir and mountain hemlock dominate the canopy while white-flowering Sitka valerian dot the forest floor.

When you reach the Steve's Peak ridgeline, expansive views to the south put you face to face with Mount Shasta in the distance, the Red Buttes Wilderness in front of it, and in the foreground the Sturgis Fork drainage. Northward are the burnt flanks of Grayback Mountain, which at 7,048 feet is the highest peak in Josephine County. Mountain mahogany, green-leaved manzanita, sedums, orange flowering scarlet gilia, and Indian paintbrush are among the few plant species that thrive on the exposed, sun baked, and windblown peak.

The trail then descends back down into the shady, cooler forest amid clusters of arnica, fleabane, wood rose, penstemon, vanilla leaf, bleeding hearts, columbine and woodland phlox. About three-quarters of the way down, near a rock outcrop at the top of a series of switchbacks, in an off-trail basin to the east of the lake,



Map by Ann Gunter.

lies the greatest botanical wonder of the area: a stand of Baker's cypress. A super rare conifer, it's found only in northern California and southwestern Oregon, with eleven known locations. The stand at Miller Lake contains the largest Baker's cypress in the world, measuring 45 inches in diameter and growing.

Back on the trail, the final part of the loop switchbacks down through lush conifer forests, returning you to the shores of Miller Lake. Continue down to your car, returning the way you came.

Hiking Trails of the Lower Applegate, a trail guide describing 20 trails in the Lower Applegate area, is available for purchase at the Williams General Store, Takubeh Natural Market (Williams), Provolt Store, Whistling Duck Farm Store (Provolt), Rebel Heart Books (Jacksonville), Oregon Books and Games (Grants Pass), Northwest Nature Shop, and Bloomsbury Books (Ashland). Trail guides can also be purchased directly from the author at lowerapplegatetrails@gmail.com.

Evelyn Roether
Evelynkr@gmail.com



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How you doing?

Shockwaves of the COVID-19 crisis have rolled through the Applegate. People have holed up at home, schools and businesses have closed, and employees have been laid off.

To get a handle on how Applegate residents have been impacted—with the hope it can show where help is needed and how we can be better equipped to handle the next emergency—A Greater Applegate created a survey included in mailed copies of this paper.

We hope you'll fill it out and return it, either by mail or to the AGA office in Sunshine Plaza in Ruch. Better yet, complete the survey online at agreaterapplegate.org.

Thank you. We hope you're doing well—and stay well.

Exploring botanical values in the Bear Grub Timber Sale area

BY SUZIE SAVOIE

The Applegate has exceptional botanical diversity throughout the watershed, but with the current community focus on the Bear Grub Timber Sale, it seems pertinent to highlight some of the unique and special plants that grow in this particular area. The Bear Grub planning area is located in the foothills dividing the Rogue Valley from the Applegate Valley, above Ruch, Sterling Creek, and Little Applegate.

Some of the most high-profile Bear Grub timber sale units are located along the East Applegate Ridge Trail, one of the most popular hiking trails in the Applegate. People flock to the East Applegate Ridge Trail in the spring to enjoy the wildflower displays and gorgeous views. Many common wildflowers are abundant along the trail, but some rare plants grow there, too. Some hikers may be lucky enough to encounter the red, bell shaped flowers of Gentner's fritillary (*Fritillaria gentneri*), the Applegate's most well-known rare plant that is protected under the Endangered Species Act. You can also find Gentner's fritillary in the Wellington Wildlands portion of the Bear Grub planning area.

The highest elevation of timber sale units within the Bear Grub planning area is on Bald Mountain, a 5,628-foot peak within the Bald Mountain roadless area. Bald Mountain was proposed as a 590-acre Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) for its roadless character, importance to wildlife, and rare plants. Ecologists and conservationists are still working to protect Bald Mountain for its unique plant assemblages and wildland value.

One of Oregon's rarest plants grows within the Bear Grub planning area on Bald Mountain. The Siskiyou mariposa lily (*Calochortus persistens*) grows in only this one location in Oregon, on the ridge that divides the Little Applegate from Talent. The entire population consists of just a few plants, in a vulnerable and precarious site. Siskiyou mariposa lily was previously a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and although it is extraordinarily rare, it is currently only listed as a sensitive species by the BLM. The Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) lists



A unique population of tall bugbane grows in unit 21-2 of the Bear Grub Timber Sale area on Bald Mountain.

the species "List 1: Threatened or Endangered Throughout Range." This species otherwise only grows in a handful of locations west of Yreka; it is listed as rare and critically imperiled in California.

A unique population of tall bugbane (*Cimicifuga elata*) comprises a good percentage of the understory plant community in unit 21-2 of the Bear Grub Timber Sale on Bald Mountain. This species was once listed as rare in Oregon but was recently stripped of its protective status. Although not technically on special status plant lists, tall bugbane is still rare in the Applegate and is a special plant worth protecting.

The Bear Grub planning area is home to the westernmost population of Western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) in Oregon. The Little Applegate Valley is the driest watershed in western Oregon, and the low rainfall and arid habitat have allowed many species from the high desert, like Western juniper, to feel right at home. Just this spring, along with Luke Ruediger, I helped confirm and document a large population of Henderson's lomatium (*Lomatium hendersonii*) on Bald Mountain that was previously unknown by local botanists. This population represents the westernmost occurrence of Henderson's lomatium in Oregon and the first documented in Oregon's



A population of Henderson's Lomatium was recently discovered on Bald Mountain.



One of Oregon's rarest plants, the Siskiyou mariposa lily, grows on Bear Mountain within the Bear Grub planning area. Photos: Suzie Savoie.

Siskiyou Mountains. Otherwise known as a mostly east-side, desert-dwelling species, Henderson's lomatium helps demonstrate why the Applegate Siskiyou have such a high degree of botanical diversity due to the wide range of habitat types that occur here. The high desert influence from the east is prominent in the Little Applegate and the Bear Grub planning area.

Other rare and sensitive plant species that grow in this ecologically

important area include clustered lady's slipper (*Cypripedium fasciculatum*), mountain lady's slipper (*Cypripedium montanum*), California chicory (*Rafinesquia californica*), and slender flowered evening primrose (*Tetrapteron graciliflorum*).

Suzie Savoie, Conservation Chair
Siskiyou Chapter, Native Plant
Society of Oregon
klamathsiskiyou@gmail.com

■ LOMAKATSI

Continued from page 1

Marko was quick to observe that Lomakatsi is working closely to finetune its firefighting preparedness plans with

its many partners, from Native American tribes to government agencies, local landowners and environmental groups. Lomakatsi is involved in several long-term projects in the Applegate River

watershed, including the Rogue Forest Restoration Initiative which involves nine other partners.

"This fire season, we will closely follow guidelines from the authorities, which may include folks wearing masks and maintaining social distancing," he said of plans still being developed when he was interviewed.

Lomakatsi, which has employees living in the Applegate Valley, took the pandemic threat seriously at the outset, he noted.

"It was pretty intense when it first hit, but we saw it coming. We started paying attention to it in February," Marko said. "We had to be agile, nimble, and adaptive. We've done a lot on the COVID-19 front in terms of establishing safety guidelines. We have even become a resource for a lot of contractors and other nonprofits wanting to follow our protocols. I'm really proud of our entire team and its response."

The group, which has 54 full-time and 40 seasonal employees, closed its Ashland office on March 12 so its administrative and program staff could all work at home. The bulk of its employees include three on-the-ground crews, predominately

Latino and tribal workforce members from southern Oregon and northern California.

"We take good care of our workers," he said. "We had a strong pandemic preparedness plan in place when COVID-19 hit. We followed (Oregon) Gov. Brown's executive order to a 'T.'"

A COVID-19 safety officer has been appointed for each ground crew.

"We no longer transport our crews in vans," he said. "Each worker drives alone to the job site. We have an inspection in the morning and afternoon. We could have shut everything down, but our crews really wanted to work. If someone gets sick, they are automatically quarantined for two weeks. We are practicing social distancing, even when we are out on the ground."

The bottom line, he stressed, is that Lomakatsi provides an essential service and will continue its mission.

"The COVID-19 response has certainly meant a culture shift for us," Marko concluded. "But, whatever it takes, we will be ready."

Paul Fattig
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Lomakatsi crew members conduct a controlled pile burn to enhance the health of an oak woodland and reduce the risk of severe wildfire. Photo: Tom Greco.



“Drought”

with Tami Quinn Hollenbeck

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a prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall; especially one that adversely affects growing or living conditions

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There are a lot of concerns in our area about how the lack of rainfall is going to affect our groundwater.

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Siskiyou Mountain meadows dotted with Large Marble butterflies

BY LINDA KAPPEN

The Large Marble *Euchloe ausionides* lives in the Siskiyou Mountains, which surround the Applegate Valley. This butterfly is white with a creamy tint and black patterns on the open dorsal forewing tips of both male and female. The female can have a yellowish cast on the dorsal hindwings. The ventral wings are patterned throughout with greenish markings across yellow veins. Large Marbles are up to 1 ¾ inches on open wings.

The female lays eggs on mustards and rock cresses. The larvae feed on the host plants, then hibernate as pupae. The adult appears in flight from late March to late July and feeds on the nectar of garden and wildflowers from spring to early summer.

The Large Marble likes habitats of mountain hillsides, open meadows and fields, forests and canyons. It has a large range inland in the Pacific Northwest.

Pictured here are photos from late spring during a butterfly outing on the Siskiyou Crest. A female Large Marble in the grasses of a small meadow allowed me to photograph her crawling and opening her wings in preparation for flight. Miles away, as I drove down the road, I saw from a distance an object on top of a grass seed head at the edge of the road. I parked the vehicle and walked slowly toward the grass and enjoyed having another long photo session with a mating couple of the Large Marble. The Large Marble is one of many white butterflies, and it is fun to find and observe a marbled wonder such as this one.

Although the Large Marble is plentiful throughout its range, a subspecies, the Island Marble, is critically imperiled and does not occur here. The Island Marble has recently been rediscovered on the San Juan Islands of Washington. Scientists are taking steps to help the survival of this subspecies.

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A mating couple of Large Marble butterflies perches atop a roadside grass seed head. Photos: Linda Kappen.



A female Large Marble butterfly. Females can have a yellowish cast on the dorsal hindwings, as seen here.

■ FIRE SEASON

Continued from page 1
due to the effects of smoke on residents suffering from COVID-19.

This all translates to more fine and dead fuels remaining on the ground throughout the summer in southern Oregon and our Applegate Valley. It means more fuel around our rural homes, on adjacent BLM lands, and along the rural roads we travel on our way to and from town or work.

Another issue: how the hiring and training of summer firefighters will play out in this coronavirus-wildfire puzzle is still a huge question mark for local fire agencies and districts. ODF noted that they have had to cancel “...dozens of training and refresher programs” this spring. Not good! Ballou also noted, “Whether it’s detection, prevention, suppression, all arteries of it have been dramatically affected.”

Unfortunately, earlier this spring I didn’t see this possible situation coming at us so that I could suggest fuel reduction work sooner. So, *what can we* private landowners do to prepare *now*—in late spring?

From my long-time educational efforts on defensible space, I say that first and foremost we need to do our best to reduce fuels on and around our homes. I’m talking pine needles on the roof and eaves, in the gutters and blown up against the home’s siding. Rake leaves away from the house (and preferably compost, dispose of or legally burn them). Move wood piles away from *all* structures.



As we head into what could be a severe fire season, homeowners are urged to lessen fire danger by taking such steps as clearing pine needles off their roofs. Photo: Sandy Shaffer.

And don’t forget your driveway, the first area that firefighters would observe on the way to your home. A good first impression can make the difference between a responding fire engine crew (not always from the Applegate!) either coming up your driveway or going to the next driveway that’s more open and clear of vegetation.

I know that many of you reading this will say yeah, yeah, she says this every year! Yes, I do. But this year is different— still an unknown in that the coronavirus could hang around all spring and into the summer. And it could infiltrate our communities, *and our Applegate Fire District.*

Consider what happens if more than half of our staff and volunteer firefighters were laid up with the coronavirus and our valley got hit with thunderstorms? Are we landowners ready and able to *protect and defend our own homes?* Do we have the ability and the equipment—hose, water, shovel, gloves, protective clothing and masks, etc. to do so?

Our fire district headquarters in Ruch has been closed to public traffic since March, in order to help keep on-duty firefighters away from germs. Some District staff are working from their homes. (Note: In the event of an emergency, 9-1-1 is still the number to call.)

Our fire chief is working with other local fire chiefs to assure that our region has more-than-adequate stocks of emergency medical supplies. Also, weekly conference calls with the Fire Defense Board, the state fire marshal, the Jackson County emergency manager, the Oregon Health Authority, and the CDC provide the chief *real-time* updates and actions.

Our chief says that things can change by the hour and that our District’s web site and Facebook page are being updated as needed. Search “Applegate Valley Fire District” on your browser or Facebook.

And please—stay safe!

Sandy Shaffer
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A Pacific aquatic garter snake feeds on a Pacific giant salamander.



A western toad.

Applegate Middle Fork hosts heaps of ‘herps’

BY ERIC CISLO

The Middle Fork of the Applegate River just south of the Oregon-California border is a hotbed of biodiversity. Among the fauna native to this region are several beautiful and unique reptiles and amphibians, or “herps” (*herpetofauna*).

The Middle Fork is home to one of the most beautiful snakes in North America, the California mountain kingsnake (*Lampropeltis zonata*). The etymology of the kingsnake genus alludes to “shiny skin”—*Lampro* = bright, and *peltis* = skin. These serpents are uncommon and rather elusive, taking advantage of the sheltering boulders tumbled beside river torrents.

A more ubiquitous denizen of the Middle Fork is the Pacific Coast garter snake (*Thamnophis stratus*) probably the most aquatic of all species native to the

western United States. They are stealthy predators, feeding on crawdads, fish hatchlings, toads, frogs, and the Pacific giant salamander.

The western toad (*Bufo boreas*) population is vibrant in the Middle Fork. Once plentiful in the lower valleys of Southern Oregon, they have succumbed to habitat loss and perhaps over-use of pesticides in the orchard industry.

In late summer, garter snakes can be observed trawling the shoreline just above Seattle Bar looking for its prey: young toads. Higher upstream, they search for more elusive and challenging prey, like the Pacific giant salamander (*Diambodon ensatus*).

The giant salamander is the jewel of the Pacific Northwest, the largest species of salamander in North America. It is



The Middle Fork of the Applegate River dips south of the Oregon-California border above Applegate Lake. Photos: Eric Cislo.

elusive, rare, unique, and threatened. Developing into adulthood, they have external “lungs”—gills, if you will—and depend on a habitat of the purest of water.

Spending time in nature is healing during this unprecedented

period. When you are out there, please consider that these fragile and beautiful species whose habitat we share deserve to be observed unmolested with reverence.

Eric Cislo
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A California mountain kingsnake.



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Animal welfare during a pandemic

BY LAURA AHEARN

The larger-animal welfare organizations serving the Applegate Valley had different responses to Governor Brown's March 23 "stay home, stay safe" order. Our two county shelters are required by law to accept dogs found or surrendered in their jurisdictions. Strays obviously could not follow the "stay home" order, so these shelters continued to accept at least some intakes.

Jackson County stopped accepting feral cats, rabbits, and small exotic pets, while the onset of "kitten season" placed dozens of new-born kittens with Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteers. With regard to adoptions, Josephine County acted early and closed its shelter to walk-in traffic on March 19, allowing specific pet-human introductions and adoptions to continue by appointment. Jackson County followed suit on March 23.

A huge effort successfully moved as many animals as possible from the Phoenix shelter into foster homes, both to minimize the necessity for staff, volunteers and trustees to be in close proximity inside the shelter and to free up space in case of a surge in incoming lost and abandoned animals. At the time of writing this article, that surge had not (yet) happened. Adoptions have continued at an encouraging pace, and the population of pets waiting for homes is low. However, in spite of screening or placing for adoption only 10 dogs through mid-April, there

was *still* an Applegate dog in the kennels. Happily, a family selected Ruby on the first day the vet techs cleared her to go into adoption.

Private nonprofit groups like Southern Oregon Humane Society (SOHS) and Rogue Valley Humane Society (RVHS) have more latitude in closing down programs and shelters. SOHS stopped its Saving Train, no longer bringing animals from out-of-state, and suspended all adoptions from March 25 until April 21, when adoptions resumed by appointment only. RVHS continued to offer adoptions by appointment, asking interested families to submit a completed application form in advance by email.

Both humane societies conducted drive-up emergency food distribution programs—Wednesdays and Saturdays noon – 2 pm, at SOHS, on Table Rock Road, and Tuesdays noon – 2 pm at RVHS, at 429 NW Scenic Drive in Grants Pass. These pet-food banks continued to operate as of May 1—check their websites for updates.

While this work to help animals continued, other vital services came to a halt. The SNYP (Spay/Neuter Your Pet) clinic, which provided low-cost spay and neuters, closed, and many private veterinarians scaled back hours and procedures. The popular low-cost vaccine clinic at the Phoenix shelter was canceled in March and April. Hundreds



Ruby, hopefully the last Applegate dog at the shelter. Photo: Sunny LeGrand.

of rabies and virus vaccines are provided at these clinics, held on the third Saturday of each month, so hundreds of pets are now unvaccinated and at risk of creating unwanted litters unless their owners could pay far more and secure services at a private vet clinic.

Our community will have a lot of deferred veterinarian care to catch up on. In the meantime, it is more important than ever to keep your pets safely contained on your property or,

better yet, indoors. Don't let them be exposed to rabies or other deadly viruses. Don't let them procreate! And don't let them wander off. The volunteer groups running lost-and-found pet networks have been extraordinarily busy since March. It is never a good time to allow your pet out to wander "because it always comes home" ...and especially not during a pandemic.

Laura Ahearn
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Three Rivers School District adjusts to COVID-19

BY LISA BALDWIN

Three Rivers School District, which includes Applegate and Williams schools, is developing plans and recreating "normal" school events impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic. Personnel are working to close the current 2019-2020 school year successfully, to have support systems in place for the summer months, and to reopen our schools safely in August, as usual.

District officials are working with parents to formulate plans for June high school graduation ceremonies, modified to conform to current state guidelines that limit crowd size and require social distancing. There is a commitment to have "live" ceremonies at each of the district high schools. At Hidden Valley, graduation "could look like" this, according to Superintendent Dave Valenzuela: Four students at a time, each with up to five guests in attendance, would be called

individually to walk across the stage; their names would be read, with some encouraging words; and then the students would get their diplomas and a chance to toss their graduation caps while pictures are taken.

Students who have struggled this spring to complete course work and credits will have access to summer school credit retrieval programs through the summer. Valenzuela notes that academic credit can be awarded through the month of September for the 2019-2020 school year.

The district also plans to keep the outdoor Wi-Fi hotspots they created for the spring school closures "active for the foreseeable future." The testing and transition center at Jerome Prairie School will not reopen until the fall.

For the last several years, our schools have helped successfully transition fifth graders

into middle school and eighth graders into high school with springtime programs, along with the annual kindergarten round-up. Kindergarten registration dates are being planned for the first part of June, and the district will, perhaps, run a Critter Camp in August prior to school starting for 2020-2021.

Transition activities for fifth and eighth graders are tentatively planned for August. As state guidelines are likely to change before then, details have not yet been worked out.

During the summer months, the school district will continue to provide students with weekday meals, although food delivery routes will stop running in early June. Several meal distribution sites will be maintained throughout the district all summer long.

There are some school activities that will not happen this summer. "We

hope to be able to conduct fall sports," Superintendent Valenzuela said, but, "all summer programming is on hold." That includes team training and conditioning. The fall Outdoor Education program for sixth graders is scheduled to take place as in years past.

These are busy days for all our school personnel, who transitioned to online and distance learning with hardly a hiccup. District administration is working to develop the next fiscal cycle's budget amidst all this uncertainty. And the summer, normally a time to rest and recover, offers no respite this year.

The 2020-2021 school year will begin in August, as usual, with the newly approved four-day school week.

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OPINIONS

Science denial threatens us all

BY ALAN JOURNET

For decades I taught science process to university students in Missouri. The study of how we know what we know was a critical component. Those students never rejected science as a reliable way to understand how the physical world works.

I'm not an infectious disease specialist, but I'm conscious, I have a brain, and I spent those decades teaching biology! What we face now is more than a coronavirus crisis; it's a crisis of science denial. Our Republican leaders are promoting ideas about treating COVID-19 that are unscientific nonsense. We know not to swallow disinfectants because they're toxic. Because we know that ultra-violet light causes cancer and suppresses immune responses, we were concerned years ago about the hole in the ozone layer that made it possible for increased solar ultra-violet light to permeate our atmosphere.

Science denier-in chief Donald Trump ignored many daily security briefings he received early this year warning of a pending coronavirus pandemic. Had he read them and accepted science, he could have initiated a rational federal response. Instead, Trump spent weeks happy-talking, calling reports attacking his handling of the threat a hoax, doing nothing, and promoting idiocy.

Medical science tells us clearly the only way to protect Americans from this disease is to shelter in place, reduce contacts, and wear a mask when outside to reduce contagion lest we are non-symptomatic disease carriers. Now this anti-science, hoax-promoting president has ordered contagion-hotbed meat-packing plants to open and has encouraged cult-following, anti-science governors and representatives across the nation likewise to reject medical science and open up the country, which will lead to more COVID-19 deaths.

While this poses an immediate threat to the nation, many science deniers

don't confine themselves to rejecting medical science. Many also deny climate science. I'd like to refute some current misinformation assertions.

The terms "global warming" and "climate change" have clearly distinct meanings: increased atmospheric greenhouse gas concentration causes global warming; this warming results in consequences such as the increased wildfire risk that Applegate residents are experiencing.

The claim that atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration remained level through ice ages is refuted by ice core data revealing consistently lower carbon dioxide levels during glacial than during interglacial periods.

The claim that temperature change preceded carbon dioxide change derives from ice core data suggesting warming preceded carbon dioxide increase by 800 years. This misunderstanding was corrected by Parrenin, et al. (2013). Meanwhile, Shakun, et al. (2012) explained that the end of the recent glacial period was triggered by the Earth's orbital cycle causing freshwater ice to melt into the oceans, resulting in carbon dioxide escape. Ninety percent of the temperature increase followed this carbon dioxide increase, not the reverse.

While constant assaults on scientific understanding posed by science deniers misinform the public, medical science deniers threaten our lives immediately, and climate science deniers pose a long-term threat to us, our children, and life we value across the planet.

The claim that coronavirus is like the flu and the assertion that climate science consensus is a hoax are both dangerous misrepresentations of consensus science.

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Why we need to save Pipe Fork

BY SANDY OLKEN

The Pipe Fork Creek in Williams is paramount in its importance for the water it provides to our valley. Issuing from Sugarloaf and Grayback mountains, it flows into East Fork of Williams Creek before continuing on to the Applegate and Rogue rivers, providing a wealth of cool, clear water to each watershed. Josephine County, the owner of much of the land around the Pipe Fork, plans to sell it for clear-cutting. The rippling effects that will occur should this happen will have vast consequences.

The Rogue River is world-renowned for its spectacular beauty and salmon fishing opportunities. Pipe Fork is an important high-quality habitat—the source of three major salmon runs that depend on its clear waters for nesting and egg-laying. The cold water issuing from the surrounding forested mountains helps to maintain the necessary water temperatures for salmon to spawn.

The soil erosion caused by roads built for logging and by the systematic removal of all trees on the steep hillsides threatens not only salmon, but a multitude of aquatic life, wildlife, and people that depend on its unspoiled water.

The Pipe Fork area is a rare gem in our community and is so important and valued to the health of all that rely on its pure waters that it's being considered for a Wild and Scenic designation. Because Pipe Fork is the main source for the drinking water and agricultural and livestock needs of Williams, its protection is crucial. There is nothing more important to life than water, and maintaining water quality must be our priority.

Clear-cutting this rich, cool, and moist landscape that guards a cold, pristine water source will mean less water as the shadeless heat evaporates the water more quickly. As the seasons get drier and warmer, we need to enact practices that protect and enrich our water sources.

The Pipe Fork area has the easternmost stands of old-growth Port Orford Cedar in Oregon, as well as other old-growth trees, which are more fire-resilient than younger trees. At a time when wildfires are becoming more frequent and intense, eliminating the fire resistance of larger diameter trees is potentially unwise.

Dr. Timothy Ingalsbee, executive director of Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE) and senior wildland fire ecologist certified by the Association for Fire Ecology, cites studies showing that "forests that have been degraded by commercial logging, livestock grazing, or fire suppression typically burn more severely than native forests that have not been subjected to these past land abuses and are more resilient to fire."

Older trees are more likely to survive fires and to spread seeds after a fire. Also, the young seedlings planted close together after a clear-cut are highly flammable and for the first couple of decades, their thin bark and stems and proximity to the ground make them highly vulnerable to fire. We should, at all costs, avoid logging in fire-adapted old-growth and mature forests.

Please write to the Josephine County Commissioners to voice your opposition to this timber sale. Pipe Fork Creek is too precious and important to compromise through clear-cutting.

For more information, go to williamscommunityforestproject.org.

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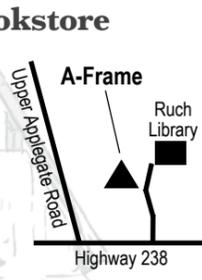
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OPINIONS

Help your neighbors stop Bear Grub

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

The Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has proposed the Bear Grub Timber Sale in the mountains between Ruch, the Little Applegate Valley and the Rogue Valley above Talent. The project proposes 1,245 acres of commercial logging on China Gulch, Forest Creek, Poorman Creek, Sterling Creek, Anderson Butte, and above the Little Applegate River.

Some units are adjacent to homes, while others are in our viewsheds and recreational areas, including the East Applegate Ridge trail, the Jack-Ash trail, and Wellington Wildlands.

While the BLM has been busy marking timber, they apparently do not have the time to include us in the public process. The BLM did accept public comment when the initial Scoping Notice was released in October 2019, however, no further opportunities for community input have occurred. On six different occasions Applegate Neighborhood Network (ANN) has requested that the BLM conduct a Bear Grub public meeting or field trip, but they have denied these requests. According to the BLM an Environmental Assessment will be released in late spring or early summer. They plan to auction these forests off to the highest bidder in September.

In a significant portion of the Bear Grub Timber Sale, the BLM is proposing “group selection” logging, a form of incremental or staggered clearcut logging that removes whole groves of mature forest and large, fire-resistant trees, including trees over 30 inches in diameter.

In the Applegate Watershed, when large, fire-resistant trees are removed and canopies are cleared, woody shrubs and flammable young trees regenerate in the newly created canopy gaps. By removing large trees and drastically opening forest canopies, fire resistance will be reduced, fuel loading will increase, and stands will become more

dry, windy and vulnerable to fast-moving, high-severity wildfires.

In recent BLM environmental analysis, group-selection logging has been shown to increase fire hazards and fuel loading, while decreasing stand resilience. The BLM admitted that forested stands subjected to group-selection logging “could exhibit higher flame lengths, rates of spread and fire intensity. Fires started within these stands could be difficult to initially attack and control. For five to 20 years following planting, the overall fire hazard would increase in these stands” (Clean Slate Vegetation Management Project Environmental Analysis; emphasis added).

Although in many ways ANN agrees with BLM’s analysis, we also believe the duration of the effects will last far longer than 20 years. In fact, the elements of fire resistance currently found in many of the proposed logging units, such as thick, insulating bark and high canopies, will likely take at least 60 to 80 years to be restored, leaving nearby communities vulnerable for at least a generation.

The impact of this logging on viewsheds, scenic values, and popular hiking trails will be severe, with large unnatural gaps created in mature forest canopy. Habitat values for species like the Northern spotted owl and the Pacific fisher, as well as nesting habitat for great gray owls would also be degraded.

ANN has organized the Bear Grub Outreach Committee to coordinate community efforts and oppose this timber sale. If you share our concerns, please join your neighbors and help us Stop Bear Grub!

For more about the timber sale or to view photographs of the proposed units or get a yard sign, visit stopbeargrub.org.

Luke Ruediger, Executive Director
Applegate Neighborhood Network
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EDITOR’S NOTE

Your paper needs your help

BY BERT ETLING

You hold the *Applegater* in your hands. You also hold its fate in your hands.

That’s nothing new. For many years, the paper has been a community product, made possible by the contributions—from articles and photos to time and money—generously donated by people eager to create a vehicle carrying local news and views to every doorstep in the 181 square miles of the watershed.

It’s all about getting to know each other better and serving as a platform where we can express ourselves, communicate with each other, and inform, entertain and socialize. Even at a distance, it allows us to grow closer.

The *Applegater* strives to be a civic good that provides value, forging a sense of place and identity through a common frame of reference, a collective consciousness for the nearly 20,000 residents of the Applegate.

That value comes at a cost. Funds are needed for the ink, paper, and mailing that account for the bulk of the *Gater’s* budget, plus nominal sums for putting it together.

The vast majority of the labor that goes into the paper—the writing—is cost free. We have a citizen staff and are the better for it.

Response to donation envelopes included in the spring *Applegater* was not up to the usual level, perhaps due to concern about the looming new coronavirus. Impact of the virus clearly cut into the need for advertising, further trimming our revenue.

So, again, the *Gater* needs your help. Here’s a reminder of ways you can do so monetarily:

- Send a check to the *Applegater* News magazine, PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530. (We are a tax-deductible nonprofit: Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, ID No. 26-2062663.)

- Use your credit card or PayPal to donate via the link on our homepage at applegater.org.

- Order items through Amazon? A portion of your purchases—at no extra cost to you—will go to the *Applegater* if you do your online shopping at smile.amazon.com. You need to select Applegate Valley Community Newspaper as your charity of choice once; after that, it’s automatic.

- Purchase a personal mailing label and get your *Gater* with your name on it—or have it mailed anywhere in the US. You can send it to family and friends so they know what’s going on in your neck of the woods for just \$14.99/year or \$24.99/two years (four or eight issues, respectively). You can mail a check or pay online. Addresses above.

- Support our advertisers that help bring the *Gater* to you at no charge. Tell them you saw their ad in the *Gater* and appreciate their advertising here.

- Want to get the word out about a product, service, or event? You, too, can be an advertiser and reach the entire readership of the *Applegater* at an affordable rate, as well as Jacksonville and areas of Grants Pass and Medford. For information, contact Ron Turpen at 541-601-1867 or ron.turpen@gmail.com.

- Classified ads are also available for just \$12 for three lines of text. Contact Ron.

The paper you get for free comes at a cost. We hope—we know—you can help bear it. Putting together the *Applegater* is like raising a barn: Many hands make light work.

Thank you all for all you do to make this paper possible. It wouldn’t—and won’t—happen without you.

Bert Etling, Editor in Chief
Applegater newsmagazine
541-631-1313
bert@applegater.org

OPINION PIECES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinion pieces and letters to the editor represent the opinion of the author, not that of the *Applegater* or the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc. As a community-based newsmagazine, we receive diverse opinions on different topics. We honor these opinions, but object to personal attacks and reserve the right to edit accordingly. Opinion pieces and letters to the editor **must pertain to and mention the Applegate Watershed. We encourage authors to include verifiable facts to back up their arguments.**

Opinion pieces. Limited to 500 words; no images. Opinion pieces submitted by the same person will not be run consecutively. Responses to previously published opinion pieces will not be published. Must include publishable contact information (phone number and/or email address).

Letters. Limited to 200 words; must be signed, with a full street address or PO Box and phone number. Only the writer’s name and hometown will be published.

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Email opinion pieces and letters to gater@applegater.org or mail to *Applegater*, Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

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COVID Chronicles**Life goes on at Whistling Duck Farm**

BY MARY ALIONIS

After 29 years of farming, we've fallen into a kind of auto-pilot mode, moving along, making plans, adding on, planting somewhat by rote, meeting with reasonable success. While we know to prepare, to pay attention, dodge the potholes, and seize the opportunities, always, 2020 has, very obviously, presented us with a new reality.

I told our workers back in April that we are on a boat casting off into the ocean. We're all on the boat together, and when we leave the shore, we will ride on together. If you get off, you cannot get back on, so make the choice. And off we go, into our current reality, on a stout boat, well-built, well-provisioned, heading into uncharted waters. Ride those waves!

Our farm store has been the culmination of our farming experience, and we are so grateful to have been open for business throughout this ride, providing financial stability and useful work for all of us and food and provisions for our community.

When we opened in 2014, we never could have anticipated how much our relationship with our community would mean, how important it would be to provide a venue to our fellow farmers and local food to our neighbors, and how critical support from our community would be for our farm's survival. Everything we've believed to be important for decades has become reality, good reality, in the most profound way.

We've settled into a routine in our store since March, one which places the most importance not on being right or being perfect but rather on being kind to each other and respecting everyone, no matter their views. Tolerance is more important than ever right now. Our staff works hard to create a warm, calm, friendly place where everyone feels safe.

There have been some changes, of course, with a new checkout system, online gift cards available to purchase ahead, gloves and hand sanitizer at the entry, air filters running quietly, extra cleaning throughout the day, as well as folks giving each other extra space, fewer conversations, and more focused shopping.



Whistling Duck Farm and Store stayed open during the coronavirus shelter-at-home period, but began offering gloves and hand sanitizer at its entry. Photo: Mary Alionis.

In the end, we're the same store we've been all along: a neighborhood store with lots of farm-based produce, our delicious fermented foods, house-made soups, pestos, dressings and spice blends, locally produced cheeses, drinks, meats, seafood, bread, teas, plus CBD hemp products grown and produced on-farm, cool local and farm-created T-shirts and art. And the best organic ice cream for hot days!

You will see us continuing to develop our new courtyard and landscaping alongside the store because we all need places to enjoy each other's company—after all, we are social creatures! We never stop planning and building because as we move forward to normal, we will all need to gather, to share, and to celebrate each other.

We need—all of us need—to create the world we want to see, not the world that was. This beautiful place we call home, the Applegate Valley, is a great place to start, and now is definitely the time!

Mary Alionis

mary@whistlingduckfarm.com

Have a story about living in a time of coronavirus pandemic you'd like to share with Applegater readers? Email no more than 700 words to bert@applegater.org.



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••• BIZBITS •••**Businesses adjust to COVID-19 impacts**

BY JEANETTE LETOURNEUX

The coronavirus crisis inspired **A Greater Applegate** to start a gathering of Applegate Valley healers to consider the formation of a Health & Wellness Working Group. Considerations include the potential for a virtual or physical wellness site, collaborative opportunities, marketing, needed resources, and other priorities associated with health.

AGA has also been busy supporting local businesses' donation programs, allowing the businesses to continue and to expand outreach to those in need. AGA Chair Cathy Rodgers has been racing around the valley giving out generous Momentum Grants to support good works by **Applegate Country Club**, **Applegate River Lodge**, and **Ruch Garden Nursery**.

AGA is also buying food from local farms and ranches and donating it to the Ruch and Williams food pantries.

For more information, email AGA at info@agreaterapplegate.org or call 541-702-2108. Contact Executive Director Seth Kaplan at seth@agreaterapplegate.org

•••

Williams Store (541-846-1311) is giving away locally made hand sanitizer and allows pre-orders for hot meals Wednesday through Sunday to help the many caretakers in the area. They also make sure first responders at the fire district have meals after hours. Seniors can order groceries by phone and pick up curbside.

CasaBlanca Grill organized a FoodShare that provided 1,530 pounds of food to our community! Thank you to Brian from **Sun Spirit Farms** in Murphy, Neil from **Cherry Street Meats** in Medford, and **Chad Guthrie Realtor** in Grants Pass for their donations and help. You can now order and pay online at all three CasaBlanca locations (mycasablancagrill.com, 541-846-3131).

Thanks to an anonymous local donor, **White Oak Farm** (lovingloveforeva@yahoo.com) provided two families \$25 worth of free organic produce and meat each week for four weeks. They were able to support eight families in all.

Two customers at **Hidden Valley Market** (541-862-7001) made masks for employees at no charge. The store continues its donations to the **Gospel Mission** and provides local schools with paper bags for picking up belongings and lunches. They advise seniors and immune-compromised individuals to shop from 7 – 9 am.

The folks at the **Provoit Store** (541-846-6286) are making and giving away many masks. They also offer family-style dinners for pre-order and ten percent off deli items. No-contact pick-up is available.

In Ruch, **Code 3** (541-899-7867), **Indigo Grill** (541-702-2320), and **Ruch Country Store** (541-899-8559) provide free lunches to students. They thank everyone who has supported this program that gives a free meal to families even on the weekends.

By George Farm (541-899-5650) is donating eggs to **Ruch Food Pantry** and offers artisan cheeses and duck eggs with direct delivery or to drop sites.

Because of the delay in starting the **Williams Farmers Market**, three Williams farms (**Banyan**, **White Oak**, and **L&R Farms**) opened for on-farm pre-order. For a list of available produce and dried herbs, email tommy@banyanbotanicals.com.

Ruch Hardware and **Garden Nursery**, **McKee Bridge Historical Society**, **AGA**, and **Roots for Hope** partnered to get 111 vegetable starts to Ruch Outdoor Community School students. Ken Snoke, of **Ruch Gardens Nursery**, at 181 Upper Applegate Road (541-899-1113) provided the beautiful plants and large growing pots.

Applegate Store and Café (541-846-6659) is giving discounted prices for their new “grab and go” home-cooked meals from their hotbox, including barbecue chicken and ribs, rice and veggies, and mac and cheese.

Whistling Duck Farm Store (541-761-6772) accepts phone and email call-in orders for health care workers and high-risk citizens. Prepay on the website (whistlingduckfarm.com) by purchasing gift cards.

Pennington Farms (541-846-0550) is grateful to the Applegate for “letting us be part of your acts of kindness.” They will happily set aside and deliver any special requests and offer curbside pick up.

(Note: Programs were current as of mid-May but may have been modified or discontinued by press time.)

•••

Our great wineries also really need our support. Most are offering free shipping for three bottles and curbside pick up. Here are just a few that are offering help:

- **Valley View** (www.valleyviewwinery.com, 541-899-8468) has doubled the size of the rows in their hemp field that are planted with vegetables, thanks to Kelly at Ashland Greenhouses. All the food goes to their employees' families and local food banks.

- **Red Lily** (www.redlilyvineyards.com, 541-846-6800) started a Gratitude Campaign each week on their Facebook page. You can nominate someone amazing who is making a difference during this pandemic! Nominations so far have included healthcare workers and first responders.

- **Cowhorn** (cowhornwine.com, 541-899-6876) was able to donate about 70 extra pounds of asparagus to the local food bank. If you are able to donate any extra food surplus to your local food bank, they encourage you to do so!

Jeanette LeTourneux
jeanette@applegater.org

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

Email gater@applegater.org.

Bear Grub study release due soon

BY KYLE SULLIVAN

The Bureau of Land Management Medford District is still hard at work managing your public lands. To the greatest extent possible, we are working to maintain services to the American people while focusing on the safety and well-being of our employees and the public.

Forests and woodlands in southwestern Oregon evolved with frequent low- to mixed-severity fire. Even though we go to great lengths to put fires out, wildfire will likely always be a part of our landscape. Fire patterns and forest fuels have changed and, unfortunately, wildfire risk has increased. The BLM is working to reduce wildland fire risk to communities, create conditions on the ground that improve our ability to timely manage and suppress wildfires safely, and make the landscape more fire resilient.

The Integrated Vegetation Management for Resilient Lands Programmatic Environmental Assessment (IVM-RL EA) proposes an array of tools for treatments across Medford District BLM-managed lands. This approach allows us to address overcrowded forests through a combination of small-diameter thinning, commercial harvest, and controlled burning. Use of the IVM-RL EA also reduces risks near older complex forests and promotes more old, complex forests in appropriate places on the landscape.

In late 2019, we hosted a scoping period for IVM-RL EA, which included public meetings, two comment periods, and draft chapters 1 and 2 of the environmental assessment. As you read this, we are refining alternatives and analyzing anticipated environmental effects based on comments submitted during the scoping period. The EA will be available this summer on ePlanning (go.usa.gov/xmuJV).

The Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project (VMP) increases the age/class diversity of forests near the Applegate Valley, reduces wildfire risk, and provides

commercial timber opportunities as required by the O&C Act and subsequently the 2016 Southwestern Oregon Resource Management Plan. Approximately two-thirds of the potential treatment areas are proposed for hazardous fuel reduction treatments only, while the remaining one-third is proposed for a combination of commercial timber harvest and hazardous fuels reduction.

Even in areas proposed for commercial timber harvest, fuels reduction is a critical component. The BLM plans to have an EA available for public review and comment in late spring or early summer of this year. Learn more on ePlanning (go.usa.gov/xvySb).

The Jack-Ash Trail Phase II is a continuation of the Jack-Ash Phase I project and a portion of the larger, planned Jack-Ash trail system that would ultimately provide non-motorized trails connecting Jacksonville and Ashland. Phase I of the Jack-Ash trail was completed in 2017 and connects the north and south ends of the Sterling Mine Ditch Trail (SMDT).

Phase II of the Jack-Ash trail would create new mid-length loops connecting to the SMDT system, extend the existing Jack-Ash trail on the north, and connect close to the East Applegate Ridge Trail to the west. The proposed action would create 24 miles of new non-motorized trails with no changes to current allowable uses on adjacent existing roads and trails. There are no designations for motorized roads or trails being proposed in this project. The BLM is currently evaluating the comments received during the April comment period. Project updates and notifications of a decision will be posted to the ePlanning page (go.usa.gov/xvySZ).

The BLM evaluates all of our actions, including comment periods, on a case-by-case basis and makes adjustments where needed, to ensure we are allowing appropriate public input while protecting the health and safety of the public and our

COVID-19 forces cancellations of Applegate Lake events

BY JOHN MCKELGOTT

We hope this finds you and your family safe, healthy, and ready for better times ahead. At Star Ranger Station the Forest Service family is staying strong, supporting one another and our neighbors. We have missed our co-workers, the forest visitors, all our volunteers, the contractors who keep us up and running, and our partners. The list of partners and friends of the forest is long, and their contributions are humbling.

One of these partners is the Special Use Concessionaire, AZTOOR. The group's commander-in-chief, Glenn Richardson, has helped the Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District maintain and operate a developed recreation program for over a decade.

Through low-water years, brutal fire seasons, and challenging budget realities, Glenn has tried to provide safe, reliable and high-quality opportunities for campers, picnicking families, boaters, swimmers, and enthusiastic special-events groups.

The sad reality of COVID-19 effects continues to grow, and the challenges of getting the gates open with adequate

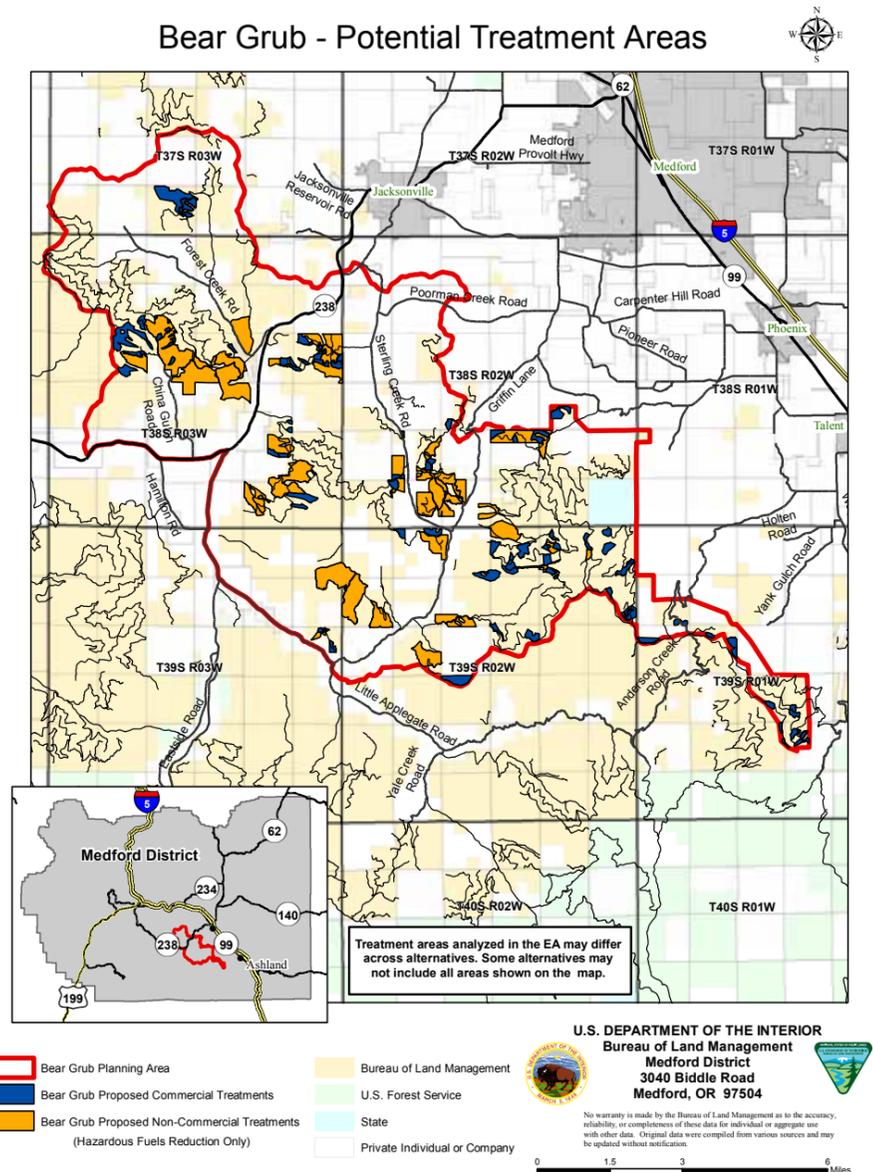
staffing are hurdles that the Forest Service and their partners will navigate together as the 2020 recreation season unfolds.

But one thing is sadly certain. There will be no Triathlon, Swim Meet, Pine to Palms, or any other large special event at Applegate Lake this summer. After so many years of friendly co-operation, the Granite Man has had to cancel its 2020 triathlon, as have the folks who manage the Master Swim Meet and equally dedicated groups who have arranged more recent events such as the Pine to Palms "Enduro." While these events bring visitors and additional cash flow to our valley, they also provide opportunities for family-oriented and crowd-pleasing entertainment that is a large part of the Applegate Lake recreational experience. We appreciate these partnerships and plan to bring these events forward in summers to come.

John McKelligott
Developed Recreation Coordinator
Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
541-899-3800

Happy Father's Day to all dads on June 21!

Bear Grub - Potential Treatment Areas



The BLM Bear Grub Planning Area includes "treatment areas" proposed for hazardous fuel reduction and commercial timber harvest scattered over a wide area from the Wellington Wildlands on the northwest to Bald Mountain on the southeast.

employees. Please contact us to be added to our mailing list, and you will be notified when project updates are available.

During these challenging times, please find some time to enjoy your public lands for the values that are near and dear to your heart, whether you are a part of the community that relies on public lands for employment or a part of the community that relies on public lands for recreation,

relaxation, and meditation. And know that we are still here, working in the field, at home, or in the office, to fulfill our responsibility to you. Please say "hi" and wave to us when you see us out in the field.

Kyle Sullivan, Public Affairs Specialist
Bureau of Land Management, Medford District Office
ksullivan@blm.gov, 541-618-2340



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If you witness what you think is illegal burning, either of prohibited materials or on a no-burn day, report it to the following:

- Jackson County Environmental Air Quality at 541-774-8206 or Josephine County Environmental Health Services at 541-474-5325.
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For more information, contact Tom White with Jackson County Environmental Air Quality at 541-774-8206 or Josephine County at 541-474-5325.



A pair of kids celebrate after picking up their bags of books at one of the SMART Reading locations. Photo: Julie Brimble.

SMART Reading provides books for kids

BY JULIE BRIMBLE

Because of COVID-19, SMART Reading programs throughout the state closed their sites early for spring break, and then the schools ended up closing for the rest of the school year. What this means is that children participating in our programs missed out on their give-away books in April and May.

SMART Reading staff is working with school staff to try and distribute these books to kids before the end of June. Here in the Rogue Valley, we had 36 sites participating this year in Jackson and Josephine Counties.

The Ford Family Foundation in Roseburg made emergency funding for books available to us, and because of their generosity we were able to purchase additional books for children in rural areas. Children at Ruch Community Outdoor School will be receiving these books soon—not just those who were

participating in SMART, but all children in Pre-K through third grade!

Looking forward to next year, it is our hope that schools and our SMART programs will continue as they always have. For that we will need volunteers at Ruch and Applegate Elementary Schools. Founded in 1992, SMART Reading is a children's literacy nonprofit that serves kids in Oregon's highest need schools with two ingredients critical for literacy and learning success: one-on-one reading time and access to books.

One thing we at SMART Reading are committed to is children's literacy, sharing books with children, and giving them books to keep as their own.

Julie Brimble, Rogue Valley
Area Manager
SMART Reading
jbrimble@smartreading.org,
541-734-5628

Letters to the Editor wanted!

We know you have something to say, and we want to hear about it! Submit 200 words or less to bert@applegater.org. Provide your name, address, and contact info (only your name and location will be published). Deadline for the fall issue is August 1. (See more information on page 19.)

NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS

A new way of doing school

BY JULIE BARRY

Until mid-March, every morning at Ruch Outdoor Community School, students, staff, parents, and community members greeted each other with smiles, hugs, high fives, and fellowship that set the tone for the day. We checked in face-to-face, shared stories, read facial expressions, performed silly skits, read poems, danced to music with no thought of “social distancing.” In fact, most of us had never heard of this term. Today, our morning community time is different.

Since schools closed Monday, March 16, our entire school experience has taken on a new, less personal face. Medford School District Anywhere Learning now helps our students learn from their homes. Relationships with peers and teachers are limited to the technology available, and their learning is guided and facilitated through weekly Learning Grids and Healthy Living Grids at the appropriate grade level. Teachers were working hard and discovering creative ways to engage and inspire students. Students were working hard and discovering creative ways to complete their assigned lessons. Parents were working hard to protect their families, sustain their employment, and perform teacher duties to make sure their students did not suffer too much loss of learning while we figured this pandemic out. This was not easy for anyone!

“I just wish that I could be quarantined with my child's fifth-grade teacher,” one Ruch School parent said.

“I miss my friends. I miss my teacher. I miss breakfast and lunch,” said a sixth-grade student.

“Just seeing my students on the computer screen is not enough,” a Ruch School teacher said. “I want to be in the same space, give them a hug, help them with their lessons. I miss being that kind of teacher.”

Each week, students receive a Learning Grid, which includes activities both online and offline for math, language arts, science, and social science. Students may choose activities in each content area according to their internet access and available resources. In addition, they also receive a “Healthy Living” Grid, with activities in physical education, art, music, and social and emotional health. Students can choose from a brief menu in each area. They have a week to complete their chosen activities and provide their teachers with evidence of learning through various digital tools that allow students to “turn in” their homework.

Teachers are responsible to make at least two contacts each week with every child through phone calls, texts, emails, Zoom meetings, etc. This mandate from the Oregon Department of Education makes sure that kids are safe and healthy and alerts teachers to students who need help with lessons on the grids and to families in need of food, hotspots for their devices, or anything else. Ruch Outdoor Community School is committed to making sure that our families and community members have what they need to successfully get through this challenging time.

How long schools will remain closed, how student learning will be affected, and what school will look like in the future are difficult questions to answer at this time. We just do not know. What we do know about our students, their families, local businesses in the Applegate Valley, and



Incoming Ruch Outdoor Community School kindergartner Teddy Bauer lends a hand—two, actually—at McKee Bridge, where free breakfast, lunch, and plants for “Victory Gardens” are offered to children.

Photo: Julie Barry.

supporters of Ruch School, is that together we are turning a very difficult situation into an opportunity to grow stronger and closer and are demonstrating to our youth what the face of empathy should look like.

With generous donations of money, time, effort, and compassion, this community has been able to provide our children with free lunches and breakfasts; seeds and vegetable starts for their own “Victory” Garden; Chromebooks; Wi-Fi hotspots; clothing; groceries for a week at a time; books; and more.

Please join me in thanking a few of our heroes and recognizing their efforts to take care of us in this time of need: Medford School District, Rooted in Hope, SODEXO Food Service, White Oak Farms, United Way, ACCESS, Friends of the Library, ROCS, Code 3 Coffee, A Greater Applegate, Indigo Bar and Grill, Ruch Gardens Nursery, Ruch Country Store, McKee Bridge Historical Society, ALLCARE, Harry and David, Theresa McCormick Center, and all the patrons who “rounded up” their purchases at Ruch Country Store.

I am very humbled to work, live, grow, and be an active member in this community. Here's to a time when we can stand face to face again, hug, share a handshake, share a meal in our favorite restaurant, go to school, and resume our morning community time all together.

Julie Barry, Principal
Ruch Outdoor Community School
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NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS

Applegate School models creativity, beauty, and hope

BY JEAN HALL

In this, sometimes dark, sometimes uncertain, sometimes scary time, we can also find reasons for optimism. Applegate School provides one of those reasons, modeling creativity, beauty, and hope. Teachers have responded with renewed dedication and creativity, finding new ways in the current crisis to stay in touch with their students and continue their learning process. A completed mosaic celebrating life and reflecting the beauty of our natural world gleams in color on an outside wall of the school. The campus greenhouse presents hope and new life through an ongoing program to support monarch butterflies.

Applegate School checked out 77 Chromebooks to families that requested them to help students with distance learning. Wi-Fi hot spots throughout the district allowed students to log in to their school's wireless network. Parents could bring their children to the Applegate School parking lot to reach one of the Wi-Fi hotspots. Every Tuesday between 11 and noon, staff members in masks and gloves handed out packets that teachers had made for students who preferred to work offline. Using school buses, the school delivered meals and school work to families Monday through Friday.

Resourceful and dedicated, classroom teachers stayed connected with their students. Kindergarten and first-grade teacher Karen Hirschmugl stayed in touch with her students by phone and set up a Google Classroom for each grade. She video chatted with her students twice a week and posted videos of herself teaching mini lessons on Google Classroom. Go Noodle videos allowed her students to have some fun and movement, and other online resources, such as Nessy, IXL, Dreambox, Epic, and Books for Kids, provided yet more help for parents and students.

Second- and third-grade students had the opportunity each morning for a Google Meet with their teacher, Mrs. Halsted, and their fellow students. Mrs. Halsted felt that students really missed the social aspect of school, so the Google Meet let them check in with



Jeremy Criswell recently completed work on this mosaic at Applegate School. Photo: Jeremy Criswell.

Mosaic river rolls on to completion

During the school closure due to COVID-19 Jeremy Criswell finished the beautiful mural begun in the spring of 2017 at Applegate School. Jeremy, then artist in residence, worked with the entire student body, helping children create tiles for "A Tree of Living Things," a mosaic on a wall near the front of the school. In the spring of 2019, Criswell, now a teacher, returned to Applegate School to work with the children once more. Choosing photographs or drawings of river creatures, students transferred their own drawings onto a large slab of clay. By adding a variety of colored glazes and lines to the soft clay, students brought their drawings to life.

This spring Jeremy returned to an empty school and assembled the finished tiles into a river-of-life mosaic to join the tree. Working alone, Jeremy reflected, "While I missed the interaction of and interest from the children, it felt like a privilege to have somewhere so beautiful to work while so much of the world was shut in. In seeing and arranging all these wonderful tiles, it felt almost as if the children were here, giving me great joy as I worked in the quiet." After applying blue grout to the mosaic river, Jeremy left a scene of beauty to welcome students, staff, and the entire community. Our deeply felt and sincere thanks to you, Jeremy.

Jean Hall
jhall80@juno.com



Jeremy Criswell works on finishing a mosaic at Applegate school. Photo: Linda Kappen.

each other. They continued to work on their reading and math curriculums online. Mrs. Halsted also posted a large number of resources for parents to use as needed. Through Google Classroom, Meet, email and telephone calls, Mrs. Halsted checked in with each family at least once a week.

Like her fellow staff members, middle school teacher Michelle Daw used daily phone calls and emails to ensure that her students were doing well. She also made use of Google Meets and Screencastify to stay connected with her students. Beginning the week of April 27, middle school teachers made home visits to their students. Ms. Daw likely voiced the feeling of her fellow teachers when she said, "My heart aches to be back in the classroom, but I'm happy to do my part to keep everyone safe."

May 4-8 was Teacher Appreciation Week. Our teachers have done some amazing work to help our students learn during these unprecedented times. Please take a moment to thank teachers for their incredibly inspired and creative work.

In the campus greenhouse, staff member Linda Kappen continued the ongoing project to support monarch butterflies. For some time Linda has been leading students through the annual process of planting milkweed, feeding monarch caterpillars, and releasing mature butterflies. Because of such efforts, the monarch butterfly avoided an "endangered" rating in the most recent listing.

While school was still in session, Applegate students planted milkweed in the greenhouse. In the current absence of students, Ms. Kappen planted the new milkweeds in larger pots in preparation for a new season of monarch caterpillars. After cycling into mature butterflies, they will be ready for release to do their beneficial work for our planet. With her impassioned dedication, Linda Kappen and her students have given us a much-needed sign of optimism and hope in these troubled times. A big thanks to you, Linda.

Jean Hall
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Williams School meets the challenge

BY JEAN HALL

Along with all other schools, Williams School shifted to distance learning for the rest of the school year after closing due to COVID-19. Teachers made packets of schoolwork for students to work on at home and posted video lessons and worked online. The school distributed 49 Chromebooks to families that requested them and provided Wi-Fi hotspots so students could do their work through the wireless network.

Williams School handed out lunches and breakfasts Monday through Friday from 11 – noon. The school received a generous donation of food boxes, which staff distributed to families. We encourage families or students with a need to contact the school for help.

Congratulations to fifth-grade student Eva Rae Hartline, who the staff chose as Williams School Rotary Student of the Year. Because of current

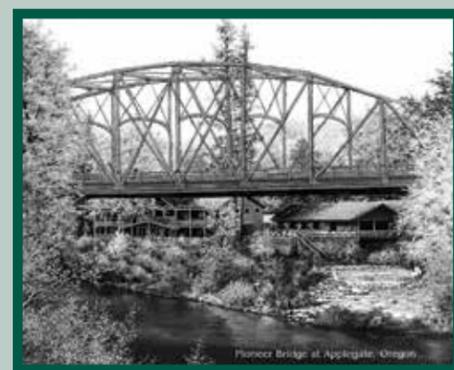
restrictions, Eva unfortunately did not get to attend a luncheon to celebrate her win, but she received a number of wonderful prizes, thanks to the Grants Pass Rotary.

The new track and field at Williams School are coming along nicely, and the irrigation system is up and running. The staff expects to have beautiful green grass ready for students when they arrive in the fall. The annual Jogathon, originally planned for April, will be re-scheduled in the fall.

May 4-8 was Teacher Appreciation Week. With all the current challenges, teachers have been doing an amazing job staying in touch with their students and providing online learning experiences. Please take a moment to send an email or write a note to thank a teacher.

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Look who's reading the Gater!

Take us with you on your next trip. Then send your favorite "Reading the Gater" photo to bert@applegater.org or mail to *Applegater*, PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Photos will appear as space allows.



Photos, clockwise from top left:

—**Barbara Summerhawk** is stuck in Japan, but continues to be a huge part of the Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council board and collaboration in the Applegate. She can read her Applegater on her computer and iPad, but we thought it would be fun to give her some paper.

—**Cathy Rodgers** flips through the Gater across from Big Ben in London, not far from Fleet Street, historic home to similarly distinguished newspaper tabloids.

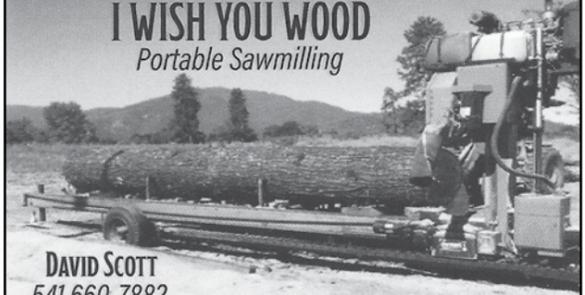
—**Katie Emick** reads the Applegater poolside in Las Vegas with her new puppy, Roxie.

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

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