

**NEXT GENERATION | SCHOOL NEWS**

**Abundant activities at Applegate School**

BY RENEE GOURLEY

As the first semester closes and spring arrives, things are abuzz at Applegate School. To celebrate the completion of the first semester of the school year, kindergarten through fifth-grade students took a field trip to a bowling alley and had fun learning how to bowl. Middle-school students celebrated their success by going to the movie theater to see the new movie, *Wonka*. Upon returning to the school, many students were singing songs from the movie. The students have worked hard this school year, and it was great to recognize their hard work.

The whole school performed in the Christmas program, "Christmas Café." Middle-school students showed off their drama skills with scenes inside a café with a Christmas theme. The heartwarming story told of kindness and generosity. In between scenes the students performed songs such as "It's a Marshmallow World," "Hot Chocolate," "Let it Snow," and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Students had fun, and it was a wonderful time shared with family and friends.

As the winter break approached, students did various winter- and holiday-themed activities. Second- and third-grade students designed and constructed gingerbread houses. In the kindergarten and first-grade classroom, activity stations were set up around the room, and the students rotated through crafts such as building igloos out of marshmallows, building a bear, creating a holiday crown, and decorating ugly-Christmas-sweater cookies.

Students continue to learn and discover in the garden club with White Oak Farms. They enjoy getting out in the school garden and have been learning

about composting. When the weather didn't allow for outside activities in the garden, students were inside learning about wool felting or making and eating blue-corn pancakes.

A volunteer from Southern Oregon Education Service District visited the younger elementary grades and talked about Bee-Bots. Students enjoyed learning how to program the miniature robots and watch them move around. It was a great opportunity for some hands-on cooperative learning.

During P.E. class, the entire school has been learning the rules and form required to play pickleball. Kindergarten and first-grade students are learning how to hit the ball over the net, while second- and third-grade students are learning how to return the ball. The upper grades are learning game play, and middle-school students are participating in a pickleball tournament.

Each school year we talk about, model, and celebrate various character traits and present awards for the character traits of integrity, organization, courage and resilience, kindness, perseverance, gratitude, and sportsmanship. In the last quarter, awards for courage and resilience were presented to Rainen Johnson, Jayda Scrape, Johnny Spencer, Paige Newell, Jackeline Melchor Cortes, Leah Mondry, Cash Faust, Jaxon Spencer, Madelyn Morrison, Giovana Guimaraes, Levi Hersha, Kyra Atwell, Henry Delgado, and Dylan Gagnon.

The second semester of the school year is in full swing, and students are busy with various projects and activities.

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**Clarifications about Linda Kappen by Linda Kappen**

(See article in the Winter 2023 *Applegater*, page 23.)

- Linda actually started working at Applegate School in the kitchen and filled in as a substitute custodian for several years before finding her niche as an art instructor, educational assistant, and butterfly garden creator and keeper at the school.

- Linda wants to acknowledge her appreciation for some well-known entomologists who worked with her at Applegate School: David James, PhD, from Washington State University (tagging and releasing monarch butterflies), and Dana Ross and others at Oregon State University (butterflies and moths). Linda continues to work with them as she focuses on her lepidopteran pursuits after retiring from Applegate School.

**Ruch students help the community**

BY TYLER TRIVERS AND HAYDEN WAITES

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*  
—Margaret Mead

Thanks to a grant from the Ford Family Foundation, students in our Community 101 group were given \$5,000 to give out to a few select nonprofit organizations. We are using these funds to address troubling issues in the Ruch community. Our mission this year is to highlight and help mental health issues of youths. We believe helping other people is beneficial because the well-being of others is the foundation to a thriving community. Two examples of our service to others are a free Thanksgiving dinner and packing boxes of food and other necessities at ACCESS.

Our group has sent applications to nonprofit organizations to apply for grants to help our project. We give money only to organizations that match our mission. We thoroughly read these applications to determine which projects are of need. Our process is completely student-led. Giving money to these select organizations is important because youth mental health is a problem that is sometimes not recognized in our public-school systems. Helping the organizations helps some struggling youth to better their situations.

The students in Community 101 planned and organized a free Thanksgiving dinner at the Applegate Fire Community



Community 101 students serve a free community meal at Applegate Fire Community Center the day before Thanksgiving.

Center. It gave people a chance to come together and have a nice meal. Our team of Community 101 students raised half of the money needed for the event before presenting our plans to Ruch School's Parent-Teacher Organization, who matched our funds. From the decorations to the grocery shopping to the cooking—we did everything ourselves.

"It's putting all of that together and the project really becomes the driving force behind their learning," Assistant Principal Jason Straube said. "Getting their eyes off themselves and getting it out there to the community and serving others is truly impactful."

Our Community 101 team recently visited ACCESS. We participated in service learning by packing food boxes for local food banks and schools. We packed boxes of basic essentials, such as soap, which will also be donated to local homeless shelters. ACCESS operates a mobile food pantry at Ruch Outdoor Community School every Monday from 11:30-12:30 pm.

We hope to plan more community-serving projects this school year. If you

ACCESS welcomes Community 101 students to fill food bags for those in need.



would like to learn more about the Community 101 group at Ruch Outdoor Community School, please contact Jason Straube at 541-842-3502.

Tyler Trivers and  
Hayden Waites  
Seventh-grade students  
Ruch Outdoor  
Community School

**New Cartoon Strip!**

Fourteen-year-old Salila Oldham, creator of this cartoon strip, is homeschooled on her family's farm outside Grants Pass in the Applegate Valley. Salila wants to write, illustrate, and publish a children's book in a couple of years. We hope she will continue to share her talents with the *Applegater*.

