



## Applegate Library

The big news for the Applegate Library this month is our Book Sale beginning on November 14 and running through the week before Thanksgiving. Here is your chance to do your Christmas shopping—early. If you have books to donate for the Book Sale, please bring them to the library during library hours:

Tuesday 2 - 6 pm  
Friday 2 - 6 pm  
Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

Carol Hoon was elected to serve as the new treasurer for the Friends of the Library, replacing Kirsten Shockey. Kirsten will continue serving on the Board of the Friends.

Our next Friends of the Library meeting will be on January 10 at 5 pm in the library meeting room. Please come and participate with the Friends of the Applegate Library. Come with your ideas for programs and interesting ways that the library can contribute to the community.

Joan Peterson  
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## Ruch Library

It's that time of year when a chill is beginning to creep into the air and it feels just right to curl up on the couch under a fluffy throw with a steaming cup of cocoa and a good book. Where do you get your good books? I get many of mine at the Ruch Library.

The Ruch Library is open on Tuesdays from 11 am to 5 pm, and Thursdays from 1 pm to 7 pm. Thanks to the Friends of Ruch Library, the branch is also open on Saturdays from 12 pm to 4 pm.

Each year, Friends of Ruch Library (FORL) raises funds to keep the library open on Saturdays. Right now, we are at the halfway mark of successfully reaching our goal of \$18,000 for the Saturday Hours @ Ruch Library campaign.

Your support will make sure that our community library will be open on Saturdays for another year. What better way to ensure continued access to the books you love at the library than to donate

to the Friends of Ruch Library and support Saturday Hours @ Ruch Library.

It is so easy! Just send your check made payable to FORL to: 7919 Highway 238, Ruch, Oregon 97530.

Additional ways you can help include: (1) joining the Friends as a Board Member, and (2) volunteering to help with community programs and presentations.

For further information regarding Saturday Hours @ Ruch Library, becoming a board member, or volunteering to help with community programs or presentations, please contact Donna Epstein at DoWriteDe@aol.com or 541-899-8644.

Thanks in advance for your financial support. The books thank you as well. They all want to spend evenings with you and hot cocoa. See you at the library!

Shonda Siler  
FORL Secretary

## Autumn at Ruch Library

Come celebrate autumn at Ruch Library. Check out a beautiful book with enticing illustrations accompanying 100 ideas for using the winter squash that multiplied and took over your garden, how-to books for those home repairs that need to be done before the snow settles in, or just a good novel for reading while curled up in front of the fire.

**Saturday, November 5, 3 pm.** Preserving Cranberries. Cranberry season is upon us, and Lori McTaggart, Master Food Preserver, would like to share some ideas for canning, drying, making relish, and much more from cranberries. Lori will provide samples and recipes, and invites your questions about canning. She would also like to explore current recommendations for canning techniques and safety.

**Thursday, November 17, 3 to 5 pm.** Just for fun, we will be having a Gorgeous Gourd Critters activity where you can

decorate and create goofy gourds and squashes with natural items (acorns, raffia, seeds). This will be a drop-in activity for all ages. If you have any unusual squashes or gourds to contribute, bring them by the library. This is a craft that you could eat afterwards, or use as a centerpiece on your holiday table.

We are celebrating community with an ongoing Community Collections display window. In October we gathered people's masks and created a mask collection, and this month we are encouraging people to bring in an unusual, unknown, interesting, and/or antique kitchen tool for the display. In December we will showcase boxes, so be thinking of any unusual boxes you may have that can be shared for a month.

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# Pottery the old-fashioned way

BY ROBERT JOHNSON

Only the muffled roar of the yellow-white flames betrays the 2,000-degree heat inside the dome-shaped kiln on the old Applegate homestead in Yoncalla. It is the middle of the night and six modern-day pioneer potters have been stoking the beast with wood for some 18 hours. They complain of sleepiness and singed eyebrows, but they also hope the reward will be worth the anguish: pottery made the old-fashioned way.

Originally the kiln was Roseburg potter Peppi Melick's vision. She wanted to re-create a pottery works in the mode of those serving the pioneers of southwest Oregon, where, in the late 1800s, numerous brick and pottery-making kilns dotted the valleys. "The pioneer potters dug their own clay and made pickle crocks, moonshine jugs, and jars for preserves," says Peppi. "Many of them just fired their pots along with the bricks."

Historically, there was no evidence of pottery-making on the Applegate property, although archeological digs at nearby Red Hill have found almost certain evidence—shards and brick fragments—of a pioneer kiln. Still, the old Applegate place does have pockets of good quality clay that potter Bruce Finch made into serviceable ware. Experiments with the clay spurred Finch, in collaboration with Melick, to design the pioneer-style kiln—a 100-cubic-foot monster—that finally breathed its first fire in 2005.

"That first firing was terrible," adds Melick. "Just terrible. We didn't really know what we were doing, and the glazes didn't melt properly." Despite the initial discouragement, a tenacious group of

potters has fired the kiln several more times—each time with better results. "It's still an experiment," she adds.

When the temperature rises to 2,079 degrees (cone 1 in ceramic-speak), the crew ceases stoking, closes the damper, and heads home for some sleep. Four or five days later they return and expectantly remove the bricks that form the kiln door. What they see inside produces some squeals of delight, mixed with a few groans of disappointment.

Peppi Melick's current work, along with that of some 60 other clay artists, can be seen at the 36th Annual Clayfolk Show and Sale at the Medford Armory on the weekend of November 18, 19, and 20. You are also likely to see work from a number of Clayfolk from the Applegate Valley, including Nancy Adams, Bill Childress, Debora Mahannah, Nancy Stewart, Larry Sullivan, and Kazuko Young.

While it will be a good place to find holiday gifts, not everything at the show will have a price tag. Among the free features will be live music, pottery-making demonstrations, and hands-on clay experiences for children.

Doors to the Clayfolk Show and Sale will open on Friday, November 18, from 4 to 9 pm. The event continues on Saturday from 10 am to 7 pm, and ends its run on Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. The Medford Armory is located at 1701 South Pacific Highway, Medford. For more information, please visit the Clayfolk website at [www.clayfolk.org](http://www.clayfolk.org).

Robert Johnson  
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The Applegate Kiln on the homestead in Yoncalla.



Peppi Melick with a pot still warm from the fire of the Applegate kiln.

# Do you like to read?

BY DEE LAANANEN

You could be a SMART volunteer! School is now in session and most of our school districts have had to endure budget cuts once again. The SMART (Start Making a Reader Today) reading program utilizes volunteers to ensure that all students who need help with reading get it. The SMART programs in Jackson and Josephine counties have 32 schools participating in the program this year. Approximately 700 volunteers will read with over 1,000 students in the Rogue Valley SMART program.

The Ruch, Applegate, and Williams schools all participate in the SMART program. Along with helping students become better readers, the program also provides free books to children every month. Volunteers read with the same children every week (each session is 30 minutes long), and this enables a caring relationship to develop. SMART readers fill a valuable role by giving one-on-one

reading practice. An important part of the program is letting the children know that an adult cares and is responsible enough to show up and read with them.

Volunteers need no expertise to participate, just the ability to read. The program pays off: An independent study by the Eugene Research Institute showed that fifth-graders who participated in SMART were 60 percent more likely to reach state reading benchmarks than students who did not participate.

SMART readers are asked to commit one or two hours a week to read with children. Volunteers must pass a background check, but no expertise is required, just a willingness to read to and with children. To volunteer, or for more information, call the Rogue Valley SMART office at 541-734-5628 or see [www.getsmartoregon.org](http://www.getsmartoregon.org).

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