

NEXT GENERATION

"Next Generation" features the talents of our local students and school news and updates. All schools in the Applegate Valley are encouraged to submit news, art, writing, photography and any other creative pieces to gater@applegater.org.

RUCH SCHOOL

Ruch Community School Annual Auction a success!

"What an amazing backdrop for such a worthwhile event."

This was the overwhelming sentiment from attendees at Ruch Community School's Annual Auction held at Red Lily Vineyards on June 24, 2016. Approximately 200 community members reacquainted themselves, shared stories, caught up on happenings with family and friends, enjoyed a great meal with wine, and took opportunities to bid on items that would support the academic and enrichment programs offered at Ruch Community School—all the while nestled in the beautiful backdrop of Red Lily Vineyards.

Once again Rachael and Les Martin offered their incredible vineyard to host what would result in a very successful fundraising event. Student art, paragliding, beer walks, spa experiences, a student-created garden arbor, theme baskets, and much, much more were up for bid—including decadent desserts! It was evident that Applegate Valley residents still believe in their small, rural school. Auction paddles were being raised over and over again!

What a humbling experience it is when you can experience support of this magnitude for the children and for the individuals who desire to administer the very best education. Staff members of Ruch School would like to express their gratitude to all the generous donors who made this event possible, to the participants who raised their paddles and/or wrote checks to show their support, to Rachael and Les Martin and their staff at Red Lily, to Bella Union Restaurant for a delicious dinner menu, and to the members of the Auction Committee for their energy and effort in planning and orchestrating a wonderful event.

To the students, their families, and volunteers of Ruch School, we want to thank you for the beautiful art, the hard work put in, the volunteer hours, and the opportunity to teach, learn, and share together. 2016-17 is going to be an epic year for students at Ruch Community School, and it is because of *you!*

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First-grade authors at Ruch Community School

"I didn't really want to be an author," explains first grader Zelda Collins, "but both me and my brother Joey wanted to make more of the *Crazy Land* books." Zelda's brother Joey wrote and published *Crazy Land* last year in Kim Neiswanger's first-grade class. This year Zelda, in first grade herself, wrote the sequel *Crazier Land*. "Now," the once-reluctant author explains enthusiastically, "we want to write *Craziest Land*."

For the past five years, writing, illustrating, and publishing a book has been part of the first-grade curriculum at Ruch Community K-8 School. Leading the young authors through the process of brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing their stories is not for the faint of heart, but teacher Kim Neiswanger is always up for the challenge. A teacher-consultant for the Oregon Writing Project at Southern Oregon University, Kim launches a book-publishing unit each spring, helping her students meet the Common Core language arts standards in a meaningful way.

When her students complain about doing yet another round of revisions, Kim simply reminds them that writing is hard work and encourages them to keep going. It all pays off in shrieks of excitement and big grins when the students finally see their books arrive from the publisher. Each student receives a free copy of his or her book, thanks to generous support from the Ruch Community School PTO.

During the last week of school, the first graders read their professionally published books at an authors' reception at the Ruch Branch Library. (This year, the reading marked the opening of the library's Summer Reading Program on June 9.) A boat made of Oreos, a character who's a mere shadow, and a pet fox seemed to jump off the page as students read to an attentive audience.

"At first I was nervous, but then when I got up there I just started laughing because my story was so funny!" says Georgia Hickey, author of *Adventures in Candy Land*. "A lot of people laughed, so that made me feel better," adds Georgia. Fabian Salas was "kind of nervous" to read his book, *Shadow's Fight*. But after he read, he "felt good!" Andrew Grier loved his moment in the author's chair. He says, "When everybody was looking at me, it meant a lot, because this is the first book I ever published."

After the reception, the young writers offered advice to aspiring authors. Acknowledging that writing can be hard, Fabian reminded authors to be patient with themselves. "You have to think in your mind for a long time," he explained. "Making my rough draft was really hard. It took me a long time to figure out what I was going to write. I was stuck in the middle of my story, but I found a way. It just took a couple of days."

Georgia pointed out that sometimes authors are "inspired by someone, like a

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APPLEGATE SCHOOL

Applegate School student wins statewide art contest

Carlen Nielsen was among over 50 students from local middle schools who submitted art last spring to the Oregon Problem Gambling Awareness Art Search, a contest sponsored by the Oregon Health Authority-Health Systems Division (OHA).

Carlen's art won the top prize by being selected for publication in the OHA's calendar, which is published statewide.

"I was very glad to be recognized for doing what I love to do," Carlen said. "And it's for a great cause!"

Carlen's piece was the only one from Three Rivers School District chosen for the calendar. Out of 50 pieces submitted by Three Rivers students, five were selected for state-level consideration.

Middle school students from across the state participated in the contest, which was sponsored locally by Josephine County Prevention and Treatment. Thirteen pieces of art from students statewide were chosen for publication in the 2017 calendar.

Carlen, who starts seventh grade in September, is the daughter of Nate and Mikell Nielsen of Williams.



Applegate School student Carlen Nielsen (left) with art instructor Linda Kappen.



Carlen Nielsen's winning entry will appear in a calendar published by the Oregon Health Authority.

Applegate School welcomes two new teachers

Two proven educators are joining the Applegate School staff this year.

Kellie Halstead will teach a second- and third-grade blended classroom. She replaces Debra Yerby, who retired after a long tenure at the school. Kellie, who attended Applegate School, said, "To be teaching here is my dream job."

"Kellie is a fine educator. I know her colleagues at Madrona Elementary will miss her, and we're fortunate to have her," said Darrell Erb, principal. "She'll be a great fit for this community."

Kellie lives in the Applegate area and is the daughter of Judy Crowe, a former Applegate teacher and valued volunteer.

Applegate staff members also welcome Star McAdam, who will teach middle school math and science.

Star has four years of successful teaching experience at middle school and high school levels. She enters the teaching profession after a highly successful career in private industry as a district sales and business development manager of a corporation with over 500 employees.

"Star brings a different perspective, having private sector experience at that level," said Darrell. "Our students will benefit from her experience and expertise in many ways."

New teachers at Applegate School are Kellie Halstead (left) and Star McAdam (right).



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