

NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

— New name and direction for GACDC —

Announcing “A Greater Applegate”: a new name and direction for GACDC.

No matter how long you’ve lived in the Applegate, you have probably had some opportunity to enjoy Cantrall Buckley Park: picnicking, family and community celebrations, swimming, fishing, and hiking at this Applegate Valley treasure.

But not everyone knows that the park, owned by Jackson County, is run by community people. Since 1996, a local nonprofit group with the awkward acronym of GACDC (Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation) and its Park Committee have kept the park open, thriving, changing, and getting better all the time. The *Applegater* has reported on many of those improvements in recent issues.

The GACDC and those of us who use the park appreciate everyone who contributes financially beyond the modest \$5 per car parking fee. The need to raise funds to operate and improve the park is constant, and we must use every opportunity to pass the hat—including now! You can contribute to Cantrall Buckley or to the general operation of GACDC by writing a check to GACDC and sending it to PO Box 335, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

But that’s not the full story we want to tell. GACDC was created to operate the park, but its broader mission is to provide assistance, coordination, and resources necessary for economic and social activities that help sustain the livability of our community. Through the years that mission has led us to produce directories, surveys, and local initiatives, and to support other efforts in the valley.

Most recently, we hosted the Applegate Valley Roadmap Project, led by Rural Development Initiatives and supported by the Ford Family Foundation, Applegate Valley Oregon Vintners Association, and

Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber of Commerce Foundation. A series of six community meetings brought to the surface a number of proposals and issues to address, including promotion of local and home-based businesses, economic opportunities aligned with Applegate Valley values, and challenges facing young people and families.

The roadmap project has led us to a new and exciting opportunity to support the many interests of the Applegate Valley. A smaller group of organizational partners and community members is now meeting with consultants funded by the Ford Family Foundation to create a free community website, with tech support, which would enable public, nonprofit, and local businesses to share and manage their own events, stories, and more.

The GACDC is a volunteer-led organization run by a small board whose members reside or work in the Applegate watershed in both Jackson and Josephine counties. Our board continues to consider new ways to better serve and represent the Applegate Valley. We recently decided to change our unwieldy name to “A Greater Applegate,” and filed the necessary paperwork with the State of Oregon. We believe A Greater Applegate better reflects our vision as we continue to grow beyond our work as stewards of Cantrall Buckley Park. We have also decided to expand our board to incorporate more age and racial diversity, while reflecting the expanding work of community building.

Our role continues to evolve, and we are excited by the new opportunities. If you are interested in joining us as a funder or volunteer, please contact board chair Seth Kaplan at SethKaplanConsulting@gmail.com, board vice chair Paul Tipton at ptipton@frontier.com, or write to us at PO Box 335, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

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— McKee Bridge Centennial Celebration —

The McKee Bridge Centennial Celebration on June 10 was overwhelmingly successful despite the cool, cloudy weather. The Applegate Lions Club provided tasty tri-tip sandwiches and hot dogs for folks to enjoy while listening to the Old Time Fiddlers produce some fine music for a couple of hours. Then Christina Lynn Martin and Butch Martin provided songs and poems with a local flavor, and Merle Ming got in a couple of poems from his repertoire before the rain came in.

On display were vehicles from the Stray Cats Car Club and a local Porsche club, and antique steam and gas engines from the Hit and Miss Club. Local crafters displayed their wares alongside nonprofit groups, writers, and book and bake sales. Several historical displays drew people onto the bridge, where they could also sample local hard cider and children could work on embroidery projects. If you didn’t get your McKee Bridge Centennial t-shirt that day, drop by the bridge on September weekends when t-shirts will be available or keep your eye out at local stores that may be selling them.

Our success overwhelmed the parking area at McKee, and we apologize to anyone who was inconvenienced. But our success was due to the outpouring of support from many local businesses and individuals who donated items for our raffle baskets and silent auction offerings (thank them by shopping local), the great people at Star Ranger Station who take care of the



Old Time Fiddlers entertained at the McKee Bridge Centennial Celebration in June. Photo: Patty Elliott.

park, our volunteers and helpers who showed up at just the right time to do what needed doing, whether behind the scenes or right out front, and the dedicated committee members of the McKee Bridge Historical Society who spent so much time and energy preparing for the event. But especially, the success was due to all the wonderful people who came out to enjoy the day and help us celebrate the centennial anniversary of an important piece of local history. We can’t thank you enough.

We plan to continue our annual McKee Bridge Days. In 2018, it will be held on Saturday, June 9, and you can expect to see much of the same lineup of offerings as at this year’s centennial celebration. In the meantime, stop by to enjoy the bridge and the park, and, while listening to the river, imagine all the vehicles and people who have used the bridge over the past century. If only bridges could talk.

Paul Tipton • ptipton@frontier.com
Chair, McKee Bridge Historical Society

Help support the *Applegater* by purchasing these unique items!

Book. *From the Heart of the Applegate* anthology of original essays, poems, and short stories contributed by Applegate Valley writers in support of the *Applegater*. Available now for \$16 at Amazon.com and applegater.org; Applegate Valley Realty, Jacksonville; Bloomsbury Books, Ashland; Oregon Books, Grants Pass; and Terra Firma, Jacksonville.



Planter. Beautiful planters built with donated local wood and volunteer labor. See these useful and long-lasting “Applecrates” at Applegate Valley Realty, 935 N. Fifth Street, Jacksonville. A stock planter box, 12” wide x 22” long x 14” deep, starts at \$40. For more information, call Chris Bratt at 541-846-6988.



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