



Applegater

Photo by Teya Jacobi

applegater.org



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Celebrating
~24~
Years

Wildfire preparedness— all year long? Or not?

BY SANDY SHAFFER

Some things just don't seem to go away. Birthdays, arthritis, taxes, an itchy mosquito bite, smoke in the summer. And all those wild turkeys parading around our property, making it impossible to walk the dog (that would be Maggie) while keeping shoes and paws clean!

Fire season, though? Given the cold but fairly dry winter we've had, who knows what to expect this year?

As I wrote this in mid-April the 2018 fire season was already moving forward in the midwest and southwest regions of our country. Our Applegate Valley Fire District Operations Chief Chris Wolfard was called out on a Type 1 team as the "situational unit leader" for a major fire in Arizona. My only question is—who's next? Southern California or southern Oregon?

Take inventory

Since we all have a role in wildfire preparedness, *now* is the time to "inventory" our own properties: What do we need to accomplish to make our homes more fire safe before fire season begins? I know that our Fire Chief Mike McLaughlin is taking stock of fire district equipment, staffing, and volunteers to make sure that we can handle whatever Mother Nature throws at us this summer—whether it's in Applegate, Murphy, or Ruch. And the federal and state fire agencies are hiring

seasonal firefighters and training crews for the summer. Pretty soon I'll be helping the Oregon Department of Forestry put up those fire-season signs!

Over the years I've realized that keeping our homesite and property fire-safe is an all-year task. There is so much to do! Thanks to pine needles, something like cleaning the gutters needs to happen in late fall as preparation for the rainy season, but then *again* in late spring to prepare for fire season.

What about pruning branches close to buildings, mowing fields and trails to provide fuel breaks, burning slash piles, working with the neighbor to get the driveway clearances cleaned up, maintaining a safe bridge on the driveway, and practicing the neighborhood telephone trees? These are all things that should be happening in *your* neighborhood now to prepare as many homes and families as possible.

(Note on that driveway cleanup: Make sure your driveway has been thinned or cleared of fuels so that you aren't jeopardizing the safety of your family when you evacuate or the responding firefighters!)

A single family's personal preparation list can easily cover several pages—

See **WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS**, page 17.

Saturday ■ 7.14.18 ■ 11 - 7

Cantrall Buckley Park
GOLDEN JUBILEE
Presented by A Greater Applegate

Join the Applegate Valley community in celebrating the 50th anniversary of Cantrall Buckley Park, officially opened on July 14, 1968.

Free Admission

Cantrall Buckley Park, 154 Cantrall Road, off Hamilton Road in Ruch. Parking: \$5 per car at 1470 Hamilton Road. Free shuttle buses.

Bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating.

Live Music Kids' Zone Food and Other Vendors Exhibits



For more information, email agreaterapplegate@gmail.com or visit [facebook.com/agreaterapplegate](https://www.facebook.com/agreaterapplegate).

Lavender Festival blooms in June

BY DEREK OWEN

This summer, don't miss the two Lavender Festival weekends: June 22 - 24 and July 13 - 15. Participating lavender farms include Goodwin Creek Gardens in Williams, The English Lavender Farm in Applegate, Lavender Fields Forever in Jacksonville, and Oregon State University Demonstration Garden in Central Point.

The English Lavender Farm is owned by Derek and Sue Owen, who provided the following information about the seemingly endless uses of lavender as a natural remedy.

Miracle healer or sweet-smelling snake oil?

If you are already a lavender lover, chances are you have an anecdote or two about its healing powers. If you're a skeptic, you may take anecdotal evidence with a pinch of salt and look for empirical data.



My wife and I are lavender farmers who distill lavender essential oil. We use it in many of our products, and sell bottles of

See **LAVENDER**, page 22.

Trails of the Applegate Watershed

BY JIM REILAND

When you look up from the Applegate Valley towards the surrounding mountains, there's a pretty good chance you're looking at a landscape that has one or more trails passing through it. We're blessed with a great variety of places to stroll, hike, run, ride, and relax in the great outdoors!

Some high-elevation trails wind along mountain ridges through alpine forests and meadows. The Pacific Crest Trail skirts the southern edge of the Applegate Watershed, while others rim the Red Buttes Wilderness or pass by Grayback Mountain. They afford jaw-dropping views of distant ranges and valleys at nearly every turn. Closer in, other trails offer views that encompass not only mountains and forests, but also farms and ranches nestled in valley bottoms. These trails may start nearer the valley floor and climb up through distinct

plant communities, offering an excellent workout and a lesson about the plant and animal species that thrive at different elevations. Or they may follow a stream, an abandoned water ditch, or a mountainside contour that similarly instructs us about how nature arranges herself.

These local trails are not only close to home, but they also make it possible to see the places where you live, work, and play from a different perspective—as part of a larger whole. You might draw connections that reorient what you know of this place and how you think about it.

Well-designed and maintained trails further our enjoyment of and appreciation for the diverse and beautiful landscape around us. Recreation is also a vital element of our local economy—trails are more

See **APPLEGATE TRAILS**, page 21.

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