

OBITUARIES

Robert Benton Ziegler

January 6, 1945 - January 1, 2020

Robert (Bob) Ziegler was born on January 6, 1945, to Bill and Maude Ziegler. All of his homes were within a quarter mile of each other in Ruch. He graduated from Medford High School in 1963 and married his high school sweetheart, Mary Ann Barker, on June 13, 1964. She died on June 4, 1999.



In his teens Bob worked on ranches around the valley. After high school he worked at Hydraulic Service and Supply, then West Main Rental for nine years. In 1974, Bob and Eric Root bought Medford Manufacturing, a welding shop, and Bob bought Eric out about two years later. After 31 years, Bob retired in 2007.

Bob was a volunteer with the Applegate Valley Fire District for 36 years, which is pretty impressive considering that the national average tenure for volunteers is less than two years. He started out at the top as a battalion chief. He stepped down from that position in 2012 but continued to volunteer until his retirement in 2016.

In March 2004, Bob was introduced to Debbie Holden by her parents. He married Debbie on September 11, 2004.

Bob's hobby was farming. He also enjoyed cutting firewood. For many years, when Bob wasn't working at the welding shop or volunteering at the fire district, he would be cutting and baling hay for one of his neighbors. His passion was helicopters—he even got the chance to fly once.

Bob is survived by his wife, Debbie; sons, Sheldon (Evie) of Ruch, John (Natalie) of Medford, Timothy Holden (Jenny) of Grants Pass, and Danny Holden (Marlena) of White City; and eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife Mary Ann, and grandson Joseph Ziegler.

A memorial service was held Saturday, January 18, at the Applegate Valley Fire District Training Building. The room was filled to capacity with more than 250 family, friends, and firefighters.

Kevin Carr commenced the service by playing "March of the Cameron Men" and "Amazing Grace" on bagpipes. Chaplain Ron McKay said a prayer. Stories and precious memories were shared by family and friends. A family video captured many moments for those in attendance. The genuine qualities that Bob shared with us for 75 years were very present.

The fire district board authorized the dedication of Fire Station 2, 7774 Upper Applegate Road, to the memory of Bob Ziegler for his many years of service.

He will always be remembered as having great strength and courage. The Ziegler-Holden family wishes to thank all who opened their hearts to share precious moments with Bob and the family over these past years.

Carey Chaput and Brett Fillis
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Taowhywee Agnes Baker Pilgrim

September 11, 1924 • November 27, 2019

Taowhywee Agnes Baker Pilgrim, born September 11, 1924 in Logsden, Oregon, near the headwaters of the Siletz River, died November 27 in Grants Pass.

In her 95 remarkable years, Grandma Aggie demonstrated her reverence for all living things through music, teaching, environmental activism, and, ultimately, serving as the spiritual elder of her Takelma tribe.

"I'm everybody's Grandma," she'd say with a broad smile. This was Agnes Baker Pilgrim's way of expressing her deep appreciation, acceptance, and love of all people. She believed in the power of kindness and reciprocity, and she recognized the biological interconnectedness of all living things.

Whether addressing a small child or speaking with the Dalai Lama, Grandma Aggie treated everyone she met with respect. She was adept in knowing how to listen to the needs of others, including wild rivers, salmon, and trees.

My initial interest in Grandma Aggie began in the 1980s when I arrived in southwest Oregon, the heart of the Takelma homeland, as an anthropologist for the US Forest Service. However, it wasn't until her March 2016 book signing in Ashland, Oregon, that we reconnected.



Taowhywee Agnes Baker Pilgrim,
with Tish McFadden at left.

I bought and read her book and was immediately inspired to write a story to deliver her indigenous teachings to our next and future generations—to "ripple it out."

Grandma Aggie's words, wisdom, advice, and teachings are eternal and universal. They are here to guide us toward a balanced world, once again.

You will be forever missed, Grandma Aggie, but you will never disappear. Your name, Taowhywee, which means Morning Star, will rise upriver at dawn. Today. Tomorrow. Forever.

Tish McFadden
rumtum@mind.net

~ In Memoriam ~



Neil James Ledward

September 3, 1927 - November 10, 2019

First director of Jackson County Parks, 1961 - 1991

Founder of Cantrall Buckley Park, 1968

Photo: Tom Carstens.

Welcome to our new editor!

Bert Etling

The *Applegater's* new editor in chief is Bert Etling, editor of the *Ashland Daily Tidings* from 2014 until 2019. He previously edited two California papers: *The Cambrian*, a weekly in Cambria, and the *Santa Ynez Valley News*, a biweekly paper in Solvang. Both papers won numerous awards from the California Newspaper Publishers Association under his leadership, including the General Excellence Award for *The Cambrian* in 2013, designating it the best paper in its category in the state.

The Cambrian was also twice named runner-up in a nationwide community newspaper contest and three times runner-up as best weekly of its size in California. Bert also earned individual awards for editorial writing, page design, and special projects.

Born in North Carolina, Bert grew up in Solvang and earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Stanford University. He began his professional newspaper career as sports editor, general news reporter, and photographer for the *Santa Ynez Valley News* in 1982.

Etling and his partner, Laurel (Laurie) Merchant, moved from Cambria to Ashland to be closer to her son and granddaughter, then living on an Upper Applegate farm still owned by Laurie. Bert and Laurie enjoy reading, gardening, and exploring southern Oregon trails with their rescue dog, Daisy.



"I'm thrilled to be joining the *Applegater* team," Bert said. "I've spent my career in community journalism and have seen how important local papers are to making community dialogue better, providing the information oxygen people need to make informed decisions.

"I've enjoyed the Applegate during my visits. It reminds me of the rural valley where I grew up and had my first newspaper job. I look forward to getting to know the community better and advancing the *Applegater's* mission to enrich the lives of valley residents and readers."

Bert can be reached at bert@applegater.org and 541-631-1313. His Twitter handle is @betling.

Join our 2020 fundraising committee

Free admission to each event!

Boy, do we need your help!

The ambitious *Applegater* team will be holding **two** fundraising events this year:

- Fun for the family in June
- Annual fundraiser in October (over 21 only)

Help us plan and create our best events yet. Join our fundraising committee now—contact Diana Coogle at diana@applegater.org or 541-846-7447—and help us raise the necessary funds to continue publishing the *Applegater*. In addition to our undying gratitude, you will receive a complimentary ticket to both events.

Thank you for your support!