

College student and volunteer opportunities abundant at AVFD

BY GENIE GILLIAM

Applegate Valley Fire District #9 (AVFD) has had great success using volunteers to support the activities in the district. Using volunteers helps stretch the tax dollars that residents contribute for the safety of their community. Volunteering is also a great way to give back to your neighbors.

One volunteer program is in collaboration with Rogue Community College. At the end of two years, students in this program will have had practical

fire-suppression and rescue experience at AVFD and earned an associates degree in fire sciences. This program gives students a career in fire departments and other agencies that focus on fire prevention and control.

At the time of this writing, the district has volunteer openings in non-fire-related positions. These include budget committee, front office administration, photographer, information specialist, mechanic, and grant writer. If you're interested in our

student program or the non-fire-related volunteer opportunities, give us a call at 541-899-1050.

The district is extremely active in training, gathering grants for equipment upgrades, and making the Applegate Valley a safe place for residents.

Fire season is not far ahead, so stay informed on how to protect your property and learn what is happening at the district by following us on Facebook (Applegate Valley Fire District).

Applegate Fire District is managed by the paid fire chief, Mike McLaughlin, and a volunteer board of directors. Monthly board meetings are open to the public and take place on the third Wednesday of



Volunteering with Applegate Valley FD #9 is a great way to give back to your neighbors.

each month. Times and virtual meeting links will be posted on Facebook and the fire district's website (applegatefd.com).

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Linking communities with trails

Trail vision: Grants Pass to California

BY SCOTT PROSE

The vision for a long-distance, nonmotorized trail that connects existing trail systems near Ashland to those in Jacksonville and Grants Pass is an ongoing, multiagency, and multidecade project. Both the Jack-Ash Trail and the Applegate Ridge Trail (ART) have undergone planning and construction for over 12 years. Some phases of both long trails have been completed, some are under construction, and some are still in the planning stages. Support from local communities, businesses, and grants is integral to achieving the goal of a long-distance trail connecting the Pacific Crest Trail, on the Siskiyou Crest, to Grants Pass.

Two local trail organizations, the Applegate Trails Association (ATA) and

the Siskiyou Uplands Trail Association (SUTA), have worked steadily on this project for over a decade. In partnership with the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation, the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Forest Service (USFS), and private landowners, pieces of the vision continue to fall into place.

Numerous and spectacular views

The vision for a long-distance, nonmotorized trail along the ridges dividing the Applegate and Rogue watersheds is shown on the map below. Views along this northeastern spine of the Siskiyou Mountains are numerous and often spectacular. The Applegate Valley falls away to one side and the Rogue Valley

to the other. In places the drop is more than 3,000 vertical feet.

Special thanks to some special volunteers

The respective boards of ATA and SUTA wish to express special thanks to two volunteers. Duane Mallams, a lifetime resident of the Rogue Valley and a now-retired 27-year employee of USFS, is our trail planner. With countless hikes, topo maps, a pencil, and field surveys, he plots proposed trails. Annette Parsons, a 29-year resident of the Applegate Valley and a now-retired 27-year BLM and USFS employee, performs the conversion of the paper maps into digital form and manages the spatial database. The map shown here is one of the results. Without the considerable efforts of

these two people, spanning more than a decade, this project would not be where it is today. Please join us in saying “thanks” to Duane and Annette!

Making the vision a reality

Our partners, the BLM and USFS, are the managers of these largely public lands. However, the energy for proposals and trail building comes from the local community. In fact, ATA on the west side of the valley and SUTA on the east side were both created for that express purpose. Please consider giving us a helping hand with a donation or some of your time. More information can be found at ApplegateTrails.org and SUTAOregon.org.

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