

# The history of heritage apples

## Third Tuesday talk set for Sept. 21 at the Union County Museum

By Janet Dodson  
For Go! Magazine

**U**NION — You've heard of Johnny Appleseed, now learn a new slant on the old legend.

The Union County Museum will hold its Third Tuesday event Sept. 21, beginning at 7 p.m. The guest speaker is David Bencoter, founder of The Lost Apple Project, who will talk about the historical importance of apples in the region and how the project has located several species once thought extinct.

The Lost Apple Project has partnered with the Whitman County Historical Society in Washington and the Temperate Orchard Conservancy in Oregon to investigate, identify and preserve heritage apple trees and orchards in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. The Project has recovered 29 apple varieties that were thought to have disappeared, including a recent find at Flora in Wallowa County.

These heritage varieties are possibly more resistant to pests and can be used to enhance modern varieties.

"I recently uncovered an old 1896 nursery catalog from Union's Eastern Oregon Nursery, containing rare or possibly lost varieties," Bencoter said.

He noted that an important purpose of the lecture is to educate people about heritage apples and inspire them to nurse their apple trees through the drought to preserve their future.

"You may have a lost or rare variety in your own backyard," said Bencoter, who lives north of Spokane and travels throughout the Pacific Northwest in search of heritage apples.

His Sept. 21 talk will also highlight the importance of apples to homesteaders as a source of food and apple cider vinegar.

The event will be held in the Little White Church, next to City Hall, in Union. The Third Tuesday series, before the



Avella Orchard/Contributed photo  
Learn about heritage apples at a talk Sept. 21 at the Union County Museum in Union.

pandemic, was held three times each summer, featuring a wide range of topics by local presenters and musicians.

Want to see a heritage apple? Plan a visit to Avella Orchard on North Fir Street in La Grande, the first stop on the updated Grande Ronde Farm Trail, where orchardist Danae Yergel is preserving several heritage apple varieties. Contact Yergel at [avella.danae@yahoo.com](mailto:avella.danae@yahoo.com) or 541-663-6756 to schedule a guided tour.

### ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Union County Museum preserves 150 years of artifacts and stories that illustrate life in Union County. Exhibits include "Cowboys: Then and Now," a livery station, and a section about agriculture, transportation and timber.

### UNION COUNTY MUSEUM

333 S. Main St., Union  
Open through September  
11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Wednesday-Saturday  
\$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$3 students



## Enjoy Classes at Crossroads this September

### Ongoing Classes at Crossroads

Monday	Getting Grounded - Feeling Better 4:30-5:30pm
Wednesday	Learn to Love Watercolor and Pastels 3:00-5:00pm and 5:00-7:00pm
Friday	Young Artists' Studio 1:45-3:45pm
Saturday	Adult Open Studio 1:00-3:00pm

### September Class

September 16	Intro to Celtic Knotwork 6:00-8:00pm
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2020 Auburn Avenue  
Baker City, Oregon  
541.523.5369  
[www.crossroads-arts.org](http://www.crossroads-arts.org)

Crossroads is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm  
Crossroads in accordance with the Oregon Health Authority requires masks for everyone age 5 and above.

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### Fall Children's Ballet Begins in September

Tuesday	Ballet I - Ages 6-8 September 21-November 9 4:00-5:00pm No prior experience necessary
Wednesday	Ballet II - Ages 6-8 September 22-November 10 4:00-5:00pm Prior training necessary
Thursday	Ballet III - Ages 9+ September 23-November 11 4:00-5:00pm No prior experience necessary

