

May – June 2022

Alsea Valley Voice

DONKEY BASKETBALL FUNDRAISER

SPONSORED BY ALSEA WOLVERINE BOOSTER CLUB

by Terry Lunsford - President

It has been quite a while since we have had donkey basketball at Alsea School. The booster club decided it would be a great way to bring the school and community together for a night of much needed fun and laughter.

We had four, five-person teams: two high school teams, a staff team, and a John Boys Mercantile team. If you were not there you missed an extremely fun time. The community and parents turned out with great support as well as our school staff and students. It was filled with friendly socializing, laughter and was a great way to bring everyone together from the school community and beyond.

It was great seeing the teens and adults try to outsmart and out-play each other. The staff, trying to entice the donkeys with carrots and apples, plus lots of falls and spills, ball stealing and rim shots. In the end it kind of came down to who had the most riding experience. One of the high school teams won with Kendra Stone being the highest scorer. John Boys and staff made a great show! Everyone's participation was fantastic!



Before the donkey basketball game, we had a great spaghetti dinner fundraiser planned by Suzette Vogler and prepared and served by her and Kaylee. They did an amazing job on their own time. We couldn't have done it without them.

Joy Jordan, our club advisor, did a great job organizing and executing the event. We had many volunteers besides the booster club board, which were fantastic and much appreciated. This event was the first of its kind

Continued on page 12

Alsea Valley Voice

May - June 2022

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Inside This Issue:

- 1 Donkey Basketball Fundraiser
- 3 Alsea Garden Club
- 4 Letter From The Editor
- 5 Honing Your BS Detector
- 6 "Find Your Unity In Service"
- 7 Little Things
- 8 Alsea Health Clinic
- 9 The Festival That Wouldn't Be
- 10 Redistricting
- 11 Dax Games
- 13 Gardener's Corner
- 14 Library Lines
- 16 Not Enough
- 16 Women's Activists Group
- 17 Give Me An "A"
- 19 ACE Emergency Preparedness Project



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ALSEA GARDEN CLUB

by Carole Domeikis and Conny Katasse

News Flash! Alsea Garden Club work is earth-moving—literally. Our focus for the past two years has been to beautify Alsea by encouraging our friends and neighbors to grow Alsea greener. We have also started a major overhaul at the Alsea Memorial Garden.

We have the privilege of displaying a Blue Star Memorial Marker—placed at designated locations to honor women and men who served in various branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. The National Council of State Garden Clubs adopted this program in 1945, and there are 85 Markers in Oregon, part of a Blue Star Highway system that covers the Continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii. Alsea Garden Club wants to make the Blue Star Memorial more accessible to visitors walking through the garden to read the names on the plaque.

The Club is gradually clearing out crowded trees and plants, upgrading pathways (gravel and mulch), relocating salvageable plants, and converting to a bed design (instead of random growth). At least two of the new beds will feature plants that attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

Already, support and expertise from the community have helped us buy a large event tent and remove much of the old, degraded weed barrier. We hope you will join us at Alsea Garden Club fund-raisers (plant and bake sales, a table at the Hope Grange Christmas Bazaar, etc.) and on workdays in the garden.

For information on what we do and how to join, please email alseagardenclub@gmail.com

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

by Kathy Adair

What a cool and wet spring this has been! While I have been hearing a fair number of grumbles from our nursery customers, the moisture has been desperately needed, given the drought we have suffered with for the past few years. I keep reminding myself of this when I look out at the gray skies and drippy weather and find myself grumbling and shivering, too. Also, the hints at a wonderful summer are just ahead of us and I can hardly wait. We live in such a special community.

We were all saddened when The Thyme Garden had to finally cancel their amazing Mother's Day weekend event, as it is always a must-attend event with all the great vendors, music, food, and of course, plants. The Garden Club also canceled their special sale, too, all due to the "drippy" weather. Check out their articles in this issue.

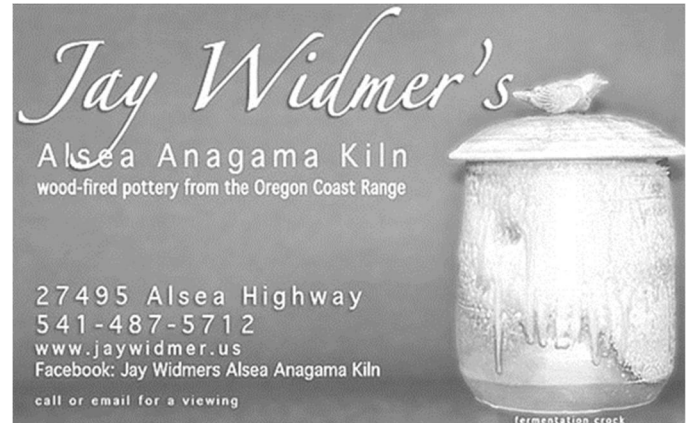
Response to our recent changes to the AVV has been very positive. The AVV is a work in progress to create something more current for our community and something people look forward to reading. One of the upcoming thoughts is to add a Classified Ads section where people can place a simple ad for help needed, celebrate a birthday, or many other ideas. More information will be coming in our next issue.

We are also looking to add color to some of our special articles that have pictures where color would be better. A logo and new title banner are in the works, as well. All of these take time and coordination as we are all volunteers and have busy lives outside of the AVV and ACE. If you would like to know more about the Alsea Community Effort, there was a great article in our last issue or contact ACE President Eddy Provost at eddy.provost333@gmail.com.

Something I'm seeing from our local groups and associations is that they often schedule early month activities or events. If you want to put something in the AVV, please realize anything scheduled before the 5th of the month of publication will be dicey whether the AVV will be in your hands in time. I need articles, advertisements and such to me no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication. The AVV is published every two months, so what that means is if you want something in the August issue, I need your submissions by July 15th. The October issue has a deadline date of September 15th and the December issue has a deadline date of November 15th. Our goal is that you have your paper by the first of the month, but there are a lot of variables at work.

We are always looking for folks to submit fun and interesting articles. If you would like to submit an article, please feel free to contact me. This is OUR paper. The community of Alsea and beyond. We want to hear from YOU!

If you have questions or article submissions, please don't hesitate to message me on Facebook Messenger or email at kthyadair@yahoo.com. Yes, the "a" in Kathy is missing. I'm sure the person who got that email is getting TONS of email meant for me!



Honing Your BS Detector: Conspiracy Theories and the SLAP Test

(Re-publishing permission given by author and original publisher)

by Jeannie Banks Thomas

After reviewing fifty years of legend, rumor, and conspiracy theory research, a folklorist proposes a simple test to help someone quickly assess how much they should trust a story.

In early March 2020, when the United States was just recognizing the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic, I got a text from my college-aged son late one night. At its core was a rumor that America was about to undergo martial law, thus allowing military decisions to take the place of existing laws. My son told me that he heard it from a friend he known since kindergarten. My son's friend said the alert came to him from his dad, who is a firefighter and first responder. The first part of the text I got indicated that the National Guard, the U.S. military and all first responders were be deployed to help enforce quarantine. After reading only a few lines, I immediately forwarded it to my sister.

My sister actually read the entire text. Then she got online and did some simple and fast fact checking. Within minutes, she texted me a refutation of the martial law rumor. Immediately, I slapped my forehead with my palm: What had I been thinking—or not thinking—by forwarding that text without reading it entirely or checking it out?

To make matters worse, I am a folklorist who has studied legends and rumors for decades. I should have known better. However, in the spirit of Skeptical Inquirer's Harriet Hall (2019), I know that I could learn something worthwhile from my error. I decided to review the experience and "reassess my priors". To borrow an expression statisticians use to describe the logical process of reevaluating a prior assertion. This phrase has the added benefit of sounding a whole lot better than, "Yeah, I screwed up". Whether we call it "reassessing our priors" or "owning our screw-ups," interrogating them without mistake shaming can open a path to enlightenment. It did for me.

As I thought about why I responded to the martial law text with more credulity than was typical for me, I realized I had been in the perfect, textbook situation to be suckered by the rumor. First when I got the text, I was under a great deal of stress because I was trying to figure out how to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances of the first global pandemic in my lifetime. Second, the text came from a trusted family member, my son. Third, it was late at night, and I was tired. Finally, I was trying to assess risk and figure out what safety measures to take without nearly enough information. At the time, I didn't know exactly how much of a threat the disease posed or how it spread. Every aspect of my daily life had suddenly and dramatically changed. I was wrestling with questions, including, "Do I need to quarantine the mail? Should I swab down my groceries with Clorox wipes? How contagious is the virus? How sick will it make people? Like all Americans, I was facing shortages of disinfectant wipes, toilet paper, flour, and yeast. I was beginning to wonder if I had to worry about the U.S. food supply chain getting disrupted.

Continued on Page 15

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"Find your unity in service to all"

by Eddy Provost, ACE President

If April showers bring May flowers, will they only be pond lilies this year? I hope, by the time this edition of the AVV reaches your reading chair we will have finally seen more than two consecutive days of sunshine. My recent canvassing of local gardeners and Alsea's two burgeoning nurseries (Thyme Gardens and Adair's Nursery and Plant Sale) has informed me that this year's go to crop may be Swamp Cabbage!

On a more serious note, I would like to thank those members of the community who have generously dug deep and made donation to the Alsea Community Champions program. It is with their continuing support and your future support that this publication and other community-oriented programs will continue to inform and enrich our town and surrounding communities. Please take this moment to fill out the donation slip attached to this issue of the AVV and return with your check either by mail or bring it to the library in person. You may also consider setting up an automatic deduction from a banking account to make your contributions even easier.

And speaking of staying informed, check out local resident Phil Plaza's article on how the recent U.S. Census demographic changes will affect who we will be voting for in 2023 and beyond. As people move about, so do political boundaries.

Elsewhere in this issue is a most timely article for these times. Folklorist and Professor at Utah State University (USU), Jeannie Banks Thomas shares over fifty years of reviewing legends, rumors, and conspiracy theory research with her article, "Honing your BS Detector: Conspiracy Theories and the SLAP Test.

These and more articles will inform and entertain you, even if you're still waiting for the rain to stop and the plant bed to dry.

Happy Spring!

Alsea Community Champions - Pledge Form

I (we) will contribute \$ _____ towards the Alsea Library Community Center operations, Maintenance Fund, and/or Alsea Valley Voice newsletter. Please make checks payable to Alsea Community Effort, or A.C.E., and mail donations to 19192 Alsea Hwy, Alsea, OR 97234. You can also drop donations off at the library.

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Little Things: Sharing Love, Light, & Whimsy

by Carol Pearson

My morning routine at work was starting to feel a little stale and the knock-knock jokes had run their course. It was not a good time to start conversations involving upcoming summer break, so I turned to music. Seriously, I wonder why I hadn't thought to share happy tunes earlier in the school year, because who doesn't feel better when Justin Timberlake is singing that song from the Trolls movie? Initial response to this newfound possibility was an interesting study. Probably half of the children expressed silly reactions or made comments indicating they were embarrassed. The other half sang along or embraced the chance to share their finger snapping skills. It didn't take long before a handful of students asked permission to linger in the hallway so they could sing along and try out some dance moves!! To keep it real, there are days I don't turn on music and I just share the usual morning greetings: "Hi, hello!", "How are you this morning?", and "Gee, I like your backpack!" types of exchanges.

On a "music morning" last week, a certain little kindergarten student walked past me, gave me her trademark smile, and headed for the library to play and wait for the school bell to ring. But as quick as she got to the doorway of her destination, she turned around and just stood in the hallway looking back my way. I went toward her to see if there was something she needed and she asked super quietly if she could stand by me and listen to the music. "Of course," was my answer; and so, it began. I am no DJ and I am not super smart with my phone, but, I did pull up a seriously cool song (to which the little dancer said, "Oh! My mom really likes this song! It's in her car all the time"). As the song played, she kept smiling and then she began to twirl and jump and lunge with her arms spread out like, "tah-dah". There were a few ballerina-like turns and then the bell rang. Time for school to officially start! She and I stood there in silence waiting for her class to come down the hall. They got to where we were in no time at all and as she prepared to join the line headed to their classroom, she said "I just love dancing, Mrs. Pearson. It makes me change my mind". It doesn't get much better than that. Except for when she added "I will dance with you for one hundred days, Mrs. Pearson."



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Have you ever heard a kindergarten student talk about 100 days? It's close to everything wonderful!

If your routine is getting stale and your knock-knock jokes are fading in the funny department, turn on some music! I recommend The Sound of Sunshine by Michael Franti & Spearhead, and I beg you to consider some twirls and a few, "tah-dah's"!!



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Get to know your local Alsea Health Clinic

Hello Valley Voice Readers! It has been a while since we connected with you here. We are very excited to share information about your health care opportunity in Alsea through the Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties.

This beautiful space may be your long-time home, or perhaps you are new to the area and you are settling in. Either way, we would like to introduce you to our clinic- a local resource that has a lot to offer across ages, stages, and needs. If you have never been in, or it has been a while, we hope this article tells you more about what you might find, and what you can expect in a visit with us.

The Alsea Health Center is located at 435 E Alder Street, across from the Alsea School. The clinic has a long history, previously operated by the community as the Alsea Rural Health Center. Over the past 5 years, Benton County, and the Community Health Centers (CHC) became a partner to provide care and services. In this time of transition, CHC staff and leadership built on existing successes and connections with the local health board. We continue to sustain and create new relationships with local community groups, as we connect with people and provide meaningful health care in Alsea.

Your Alsea Health Center is one of six clinics that make up the Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties. The clinic operates as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). This means it is part of a Community Health Center model found in communities across the United States. While our connection to the world of Community Health Centers helps set our mission- providing care to people where they are in the community through physical, behavioral, and oral health- we are also unique in our ties to the local county health structure. Staff who work at this clinic are Benton County staff who work for the Community Health Center. Our commitment is to provide services to you as part of a low-barrier, easy access, locally relevant, health care. Because of our county connection, we can coordinate outreach and efforts with public health, environmental health, and other county functions, as needed.

Specifically, the care we offer is for all people- infants to seniors, with any type of insurance (private, Medicare, Medicaid). Care is also available to those without insurance through our sliding fee scale discount. If you do not have insurance, we base the cost of care on income and family size. If people are eligible for insurance and need help with applications, we can often provide that.

Continued on Page 12



The Festival That Wouldn't Be!

By Janet Hagen

Well, it happened again. Back when the Covid pandemic first started The Thyme Garden had been getting ready to celebrate their 30th year in business. Thyme has sure gone by fast, as we are having fun! So, in those initial two years, everyone stayed home or went out masked and we were not to meet in large groups to avoid super-spreaders.

One might guess how happy The Thyme Garden staff was to finally be able to welcome back our returning artists and welcome some new artists as well. How excited to run a food booth and hear some great music all day long after such a pause.

But (as the Gazette Times stated) "This happened.....": Emily and Bethany were all prepared with things in place to be better than ever, but the prediction for Mother's Day Weekend was 100% chance of rain, both days. However, according to the weather-guesser, the rain was to stop on the Monday following "real Mother's Day" and be nice all the way up to and through the following weekend. Preparations could be continued! Phone calls just needed to be made to let everyone involved know that the show, while canceled for the real day, could and would go on the next weekend. The Gazette Times graciously posted the information for us, and much work was done lining things up once again.

However, there was a change (post-announcement) in the weather prediction and indeed it was changed full on rain once again. By that time, the normal May rainfall for the month had already happened and the creek was at flood stage and there was no way they could attempt to host the usual 1800 guests who were looking forward to attending this festival as their Mother's Day treat. Rolfe, founder, now semi-retired felt that he and the parking staff would not care to push out every car in attendance from the mud and Janet (also retired, now babysitting Grandma) felt worried that the land would be forever ruined. So, Emily once again set about canceling the festival.

The Thyme Garden has celebrated two mini-Mother's Day Weekends with supporters turning but in smaller numbers. And The Thyme Garden, the guests, the artists, the winery, and the beer purveyor are already looking forward to the real festival taking place in 2023. (God willing, and the creek don't rise).

FYI: The Thyme Garden is open daily in the spring from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and after June 1 we are open to the public on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday from 11-4 until August 15. We host very well received tours and luncheons, basket classes, salve, and herbal healing workshops on Tues, Weds and Thursdays each week. Call for more information and to sign up or you can sign up online, a new option this year.

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Redistricting

by Phil Plaza

I woke up one morning in April and suddenly realized that I had been "Re-districted." Is that really a word, "Re-districted?" Was I being put out to pasture for now? Well, as you may know because of the latest census, the State was required to redistrict some us in order to balance out the voting population numbers. Like it or not, it happened. And it will be like this for the next 10 years. I kind of wished the State would somehow have informed me about my being Re-districted. They say knowledge is power, but you have no power if you don't know to whom you might want to Voice your concerns. I thought about putting this information into the Alsea Valley Voice.



So, what does this all really mean? And when does this change actually take place? Well, the answer to the second question is, we won't be redistricted until 2023. Hence for the rest of 2022, we are in the same old lame duck districts. And just who will be our newly elected representatives? The ones we can reach out to, the individuals we can complain to regarding issues about Alsea or Lobster Valley? Maybe it is time to introduce you to both the newly formed districts and our potential future representatives.

Having been to the State Capitol in Salem to personally speak with our former representatives, I get the feeling these new folks from the coast may be receptive to our concerns in Alsea and Lobster Valley.

The following link can give you an idea of the new boundaries. Remember this is for the years 2023-2033. Look for House District 10 and Senate District 5.

www.oregonlegislature.gov/redistricting/Pages/details.aspx

Now where in this new world is our House District. Roughly speaking, newly located House District 10 runs along the Pacific Coast from just above Lincoln City to just north of Florence. And then eastward toward Corvallis and south alongside Highway 99 to just above Eugene.

Presently, Representative David Gomberg, who lives along the coast in Neotsu, yes Noetsu, is running for re-election this November. His state website is:

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/gomberg>

These poor folks have to run every 2 years for their office and so he will have a challenger from the Republican Party. The challenger seems to be Celeste McEntee, who also lives along the coast. I get the feeling we might have more in common with coastal folks than we did with our previous districts.

Continued on page 11

Continued from Page 10

As for the new Senate District, welcome to SD 5 and Dick Anderson, former Mayor of Lincoln City, as our next year's Senator. Remember they are elected for 4 year terms. Here is Dick's website:

www.oregonlegislature.gov/senate/Pages/SenatorsDistrict.aspx

This is a much larger area since SD5 will encompass an area north of Lincoln City to just south of Coos Bay and also runs east toward Corvallis and Highway 99 and then further south. This is an area that has a lot of forested land.

Now if you are swimming in confusion about links, districts, numbers and names, you have plenty of time to figure it all out. Just use Mr. Google or some other resource to do your own research, get the facts and figures. Perhaps even voice your concerns. I for one look forward to meeting these folks in the future.

The Legendary Dax Games of our Neighbor

It's a relatively quiet Friday afternoon in Philomath Oregon. Nothing unusual to speak of, unless you think that a fleet of robots on either side of Main Street with bright orange and green Fedora hats on is unusual.



For the great community of Philomath, it is just another Friday with their friendly hometown delivery robot Dax. For people passing through town, several cars would pull over to the side of the road, take pictures and ask questions. Sometimes the questions were directed at the robot, sometimes directed to the humans that were working with them.

Friday, May 20th was a bit more unusual for Dax; hence the fedoras. While that isn't Dax's usual look, they do look good for a robot! This marked the second of the Dax Games. The first Dax Games was a few weeks back when the orange and green teams played a round of capture the flag. Since Dax doesn't have arms we had to modify the game a bit since Dax can't grab the flag and run. Even with the modification it was a lot of fun to watch (as Daxbot live streamed the event on YouTube and Facebook).

The latest installment of the Dax games was a modified King of the Hill, where different teams of Dax had to autonomously navigate to different 'zones' where they gained points. They also gained points by receiving candy from the wonderful people of Philomath. These tests are fun for the community and for our team here at Daxbot, but they are also serving a greater purpose of testing autonomous systems on Dax. As we continue

to develop and progress, we are excited to increase the autonomy of Dax robots to where they can take on more and more tasks that don't require human intervention.

While it is true that we are a long way off to having R2-D2 type autonomy, these Dax games are proving to ourselves and the world that we are just one small step closer to that reality. Stay tuned for the next Dax Games and thank you Oregon for being such a great place to call home!

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Continued from Page 8

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To keep up with the work we do and learn about local events, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BentonLinnCHCs.

If you are interested in becoming a patient, please call the Alsea Health Center today at 541-487-7116. Our staff are happy to talk to you about making an appointment or learning more about our care and services.

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Continued from Cover Page

where many volunteers were needed. It was a great experience for the booster club to meet and engage new people to help support our efforts.

It was an all-around success. After expenses we were able to net enough funds to add to our planning of projects and purchases for our mission.

Thank you to Alsea School, parents, and the community for your support!

Please check out our Facebook Alsea Wolverine Booster page with lots of pictures!



Gardener's Corner – Plant for Preserving

by Kathy Adair

Gardening season is finally here, and this is a fun opportunity to think about what types of preserved foods you would like in your pantry or freezer. Garden vegetables like green beans, beets, peppers, tomatoes and so many more are perfect both fresh and for preserving. Cabbage makes for super easy sauerkraut. Puree or coarsely chop tomatoes, peppers, onions, cilantro, or parsley for a great sauce base for meals. Your garden isn't just about providing fresh fruit and vegetables during the summer and fall, but to give you that bounty all year long. Planning ahead helps to make it easier to process your bounty to enjoy beyond the growing season.

Raised beds and container gardening make growing easier, especially if you hate to weed or have annoying ground thieves stealing your tender starts. Quarter inch mesh at the bottom of the beds helps to keep moles, voles, and other pesky critters from undermining your hard work. Raised beds and containers can also be more manageable if you don't need or have a large plot of land to garden. While living in Waldport and Newport, I had a very successful container garden, especially when they were up against the house to get the radiant heat from the siding. Even here at our home in Alsea, we still container garden on the back porch with some of our favorite tomatoes and lettuce. It's so easy to just step out back and pick what we need for a meal.

Just as we need nutrients to be healthy, so do your plants. Remember to give them additional feed, especially early in the growing season. Whether it is fish fertilizer, Miracle Grow or whatever, your plants will thank you. When your plants are healthy, your crop will be healthy, too.

One question I get a lot is about watering. It's just as easy to over water as to under water. A good rule is to stick your finger into the soil to the second joint. If the soil is dry, water it. If it's still damp or wet, don't. Also, pay attention to the weather. If it's hot and dry, your soil will dry out much quicker and your plants will be pulling more moisture to stay well-hydrated. If there is a wind, it will dry out even more quickly. This is when you may have to water more than once a day. Certain plants will drink more than others, so paying attention to their needs will reward you with a good harvest.

Finding that your plants are taking over everything? Pinching off extra leaves or runners will significantly benefit your crop yield. The extra energy going to those extra parts of the plant can now go towards the fruit or vegetable being grown. Tomatoes and squash plants particularly, will do much better without the extra foliage.

Gardening is extremely rewarding. It doesn't just nurture your body, but it nurtures your soul. While we all are getting back to "normal", let's not forget to take care of ourselves and spend that extra little bit of time communing with nature in our gardens. When we put that bit of energy into our plants, they will gift us in return with great produce. Weeding doesn't have to be a boring, annoying chore, but an opportunity to just relax and decompress while extending a little care. Plants will do that for you. Give a little, get a lot.

If you find yourself unsure or have questions regarding your garden plants, feel free to message me or email me at kthyadair@yahoo.com. (No "a" in Kathy)

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Library Lines

by Kathy Koetz

Is your garden all in? Do you need help figuring out what to plant? Or what that "plant" is? We have many books that can help with getting and keeping your garden healthy!

The theme for Summer Reading this year is "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" Drop in (or sign up online on Beanstack) to get a free book and bag! Get a reading log, read for 35 days, bring it back and get another free book!

We have a great Summer Reading Adventures planned for this summer! There are so many things that can fit this theme and we are trying a bunch!

Here is the schedule for the in-person programs this summer:

June 23	1:30-3	Painting-palooza	Get ready, get set, PAINT! Try out several painting mediums to create your own masterpieces. Recommended for ages 3-12.
June 30	1:30-3	Park Rangers	Children and families are invited to learn about nature from a Park Ranger in this interactive event. Recommended for all ages.
July 7	1:30-3	Crafts Exploration	What will you create? Bring your imaginations and let them run wild while you craft. Recommended for ages 3-12.
July 14	1:30-2:45	Creature Teachers	Are you curious about animals? Come meet some special creatures and learn about their amazing habits! Recommended for all ages.
July 21	1:30-3	Make It move	Balloon and solar powered cars.
July 28	1:30-3	Play-Doh & Clay	Sculpt, shape, and create with Play-Doh and clay. You'll take home some of your amazing creations! Recommended for ages 3-12.

We will also have some take home Kits (while supplies last):

Available June 28th: Park Ranger Kit - get a kit to help explore our area! Includes map, supplies and activities.

Available July 26: Bug Jar Kit – decorate a jar and collect bugs.



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Continued from page 5

Also, when I got the text, I had just read the news that California counties in the Bay area were under “shelter in place” orders. So, I did what a lot of Americans do: I decided to “share the scare” with someone I loved, to borrow a phrase from Benjamin Radford (2021a).

I also realized that, to my credit, when I’m less sleep deprived and less worried about contagion, illness, and toilet paper, I’m typically quick to spot rumors and conspiracy theories—as are skeptics and my colleagues who study these types of narratives. So, an important question to ask was, “What was I doing right in all those other situations when I quickly realized I was dealing with a rumor or conspiracy theory?” My years as a folklore scholar meant that I was attuned to their patterns. For example, I could easily identify when old patterns were repeated, such as when anti-Semitic blood libel rumors and legends were recycled during the Satanic Panics of the 1980s and 1910s—and then again when those same narratives got dredged up with a little variation and incorporated into the contemporary QAnon conspiracy theories.

I realized that clearly articulating even a few of the patterns that frequently signaled a legend, rumor, or conspiracy theory could be useful for people who don’t study these genres professionally. I wanted to help us all quickly identify and unverified account when we encounter it in our everyday lives. This is a desperately needed skill in the face of the pandemic proliferation of misinformation, rumor, and conspiracy theories. The process needs to be simple and easy to remember, so people can apply it in real time when they encounter these narratives.

The SLAP Test

To discern the patterns that signal an unverified account, I reviewed over fifty years of legend, rumor and conspiracy theory research. I also did a pattern analysis of over 100 legends. What emerged from this process is what I call the SLAP Test. SLAP is an acronym for Scare or Shock, Logistics, A-List, and Prejudice. Using this simple test can help someone quickly assess how much they should trust a story’s veracity. The acronym is intended to be sticky; people can’t use a tool they can’t remember. This test is something we can all use to SLAP some sense into ourselves when it comes to conspiracy theories and the choking algal bloom of questionable narratives fueled by the coronavirus pandemic.

The SLAP Test consists of four simple questions:

1. Does the account attempt to scare or shock? If the answer is yes, be wary.
2. Does the account rely on complicated or farfetched logistics? If the answers is yes, be wary.
3. Does the account involve A-listers? –famous people, products, or events? If the answer is yes, be wary.
4. Does the account demonstrate prejudice, that is, does it demonize or portray a person or group as “other”? If the answer is yes, be wary.

“Yes” answers should make our personal BS detectors go off like the loudest alarms on our cell phones. Once this happens, some quick online research can help us further assess the account. Here, it’s important to keep in mind that what some person says on a message board does not constitute “research”. Research, of course, is vetted information that is supported with evidence. Reliable fact-checking site on the internet provide this kind of information: examples include Leadstories.com and FactCheck.org. The SLAP Test can help us process the fire hose of misinformation that is today’s internet. I can give us the time we need to slow down and think before we obey the implied imperative (Believe this! Share this! Do something! Buy my supplement!) that conspiracy theories often push.

Continued on Page 18

Not Enough

by The Dalai Lama

Wherever I go, I feel I'm just one of the 7 billion beings alive today. We are physically, mentally and emotionally the same. From birth, we all want to live a happy life and that is our right. However, many of my friends share the view that our existing education systems are inadequate when it comes to preparing people to be more compassionate—one of the conditions for being happy. As a human brother I'm committed to letting people know that we all possess the seeds to love and compassion. However, having a smart brain is not enough; we also need a warm heart.

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Alsea Women's Activist Group

by Janet Hagen

On Saturday, May 14 from noon to three, Corvallis hosted a women's walk in support of freedom of choice for women.

Five women (at least) from Alsea participated in the walk. As more than 1000 people, men, women and children traversed from the MU lawn on Oregon State University to the Courthouse, they chanted, held heartfelt signs, and gathered energy in support of women and the progress we have made since the 70's and do not want to give up here almost 50 years later! The event was organized by several college women with sincerity and passion for their cause in order to publicly confirm support for the cause. Over 40 of the United States held similar walks on the same date. The feeling of doing something to support your beliefs is very empowering and exciting and the sharing of women of their stories once we reached the Courthouse was amazing.

I had heard of this event by chance through a Corvallis friend and forwarded the information to an Alsea friend and we formed a carpool group after we heard about it. But the thought occurred to me that many more folks out here might have been interested but not had the opportunity to hear of it, so I wanted to reach out and see if this is true and offer to begin some kind of sharing group who could let each other know when things of importance are going on.

If anyone is interested, please contact Janet Hagen by phone at 541-487-8671 or by email at herblovingjanet@hotmail.com and we will see where this idea could lead us.

GIVE ME AN "A"

by Suzanne Baccus

If you attended school in Alsea, your mind probably followed with, "give me an L, give me an S, give me an E, give me an A. What's that spell? ALSEA! What? ALSEA!" It was a cheer that accompanied many years of Alsea athletics and always got the crowd going.

As you may or may not know, for many years an all-class reunion/potluck has been held, at the Grange Hall, on the third Saturday of July, beginning around 11:00. Due to covid the last two years were cancelled. Traditionally the class celebrating their 50th served as host.

Unfortunately, in 2019 we were unable to find a 50-year host. In an attempt to contact one, I spoke on Facebook with a man named, Follett, for three weeks before he confessed that he'd never heard of Alsea, he just liked my picture.

This summer, the reunion/potluck will be held July 16th. So, it would be wonderful if you or someone you know would like to celebrate their 50th by gathering classmates and hosting.

Please contact me, sue42@peak.org, with any information you may have of people who graduated in 1972. It would be great to get back to the old tradition. If no one steps forward, the people who attended the last reunion agreed everyone would pitch in and set up tables and chairs (minus a head table).

It is all-class, meaning anyone who attended, Alsea, is welcome.

Please put Saturday the 16th of July on your calendar and spread the word. People often bring old year books, newspaper articles and photos. This year, there's been rumors of an event the night before and on Saturday, sharing the blueprints for and touring the renovations that have begun. Stand by for further info on that.

It's great to see everyone reminiscing, catching up, eating lunch, meeting old and making new friends. In the past we've had former teachers and coaches attend. Someone might even shout out....GIVE ME AN "A"!

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Continued from Page 15

Research indicates that getting in arguments with friends and family about conspiracy theories doesn't work (Bodner et al. 2020). We will always have hardcore conspiracy theories and true believers. No amount of SLAP-ing will get through to them. However, it can help the rest of us, such as a young woman I talked with at a beauty salon. She asked me what I did for a living, and I told her I was a folklorist who studied legends, rumors, and conspiracy theories. She said, "Oh. I love conspiracy theories!" She told me that she and her family liked to watch the conspiracy-based shows on Netflix and then discuss them. I replied "Conspiracy theories are really interesting, aren't they? Tell me about one that intrigues you". She then mentioned the conspiracy theories positing that George W. Bush was behind the September 11, 2001, attacks.

I listened and didn't say anything. When she was done, I asked her, "Would you like an easy tool that helps you decide which conspiracy theories are probably true and which ones are probably false?" She said yes. By this time all the other salon customers in the room were also listening to our conversation. I quickly laid out the SLAP Test and asked her what happened when she applied it to her favorite conspiracy theories. I could see she was thinking and SLAPping the stories. Soon she started laughing and said, "Well, I should be wary of them all!" To my delight, she went on to provide more analysis of her own of the stories. "You know," she said, "What I always wonder is why do people believe just one person who shares these conspiracies?"

The young woman in the beauty salon deserves a lot of credit for being open-minded and willing to analyze the conspiracy theories that she liked. When she told me she enjoyed conspiracy theories, I was careful not to shame her for that. I also didn't talk too much; I listened. When I did converse with her, I tried to avoid conveying sentiments such as, "Beware! Conspiracy theories are evil! Why on earth would you believe that junk?!" Again, such an approach is usually not persuasive. (Radford 2021b). Instead, I hoped to communicate to her that she could still enjoy the conspiracy theories while quickly assessing their veracity—a process that also encourages further engagement with the narratives and can even add to their fun and intrigue.

The SLAP Test didn't take away or stigmatize a source of narrative pleasure for her and her family. Instead, it gave her a tool to do more thinking about stories she already relished.

Scholars and skeptics are sometimes criticized for coming across as grumpy, pleasure-killing scolds. The SLAP Test allows for a more exploratory, even playful, frame. It also provides a way for people to uncover truth for themselves. Instead of getting into pointless arguments about rumors and conspiracy theories, using the test is a way that we can all SLAP unverified stories—and not our friends and family members.

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Bodner, John, Wendy Welch, Ian Brodie, et al. 2020 *Covid-19 Conspiracy Theories: Canon, 5G, the New World Order and other Viral Ideas*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company.

Hall, Harriet, 2019 I was wrong (and I bet you were too). *Skeptical Inquirer Online* (July 9)

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Jeannie Banks Thomas is a folklorist and professor at Utah State University (USU). She is also a fellow of the American Folklore Society. She is the author or coauthor of numerous articles and several books about legends and gender. She codirects USU's digital Folklore Project, which names the #DigitalTrendoftheYear.



ALSEA COMMUNITY EFFORT

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROJECT

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISTRIBUTION of BACKUP CORDED TELEPHONES

Ace's Emergency Preparedness Program has received a small grant from Lincoln County under its Emergency Preparedness Matching Grant Program to help with Alsea's ongoing emergency preparedness. A portion of the funds was set aside to purchase corded phones for backup for emergency communications. These phones are to be distributed to households in the rural parts of the Alsea area, with no cell service, with landlines but do not have a corded phone which can be plugged in when the electricity goes out.

The APEC has used \$500 to purchase 33 corded phones. We are ready to distribute these phones to households that do not currently have a corded phone but still have a working landline. The requirement for receiving one of these phones is that the household must sign up for the Lincoln County Emergency Alert System and the Benton County Emergency Alert System.

If you are interested in getting one of these corded phones for emergency communications backup for your home, please complete the form below and return it to the ACE office at the Alsea Library. Call Naomi Shadwick at 541-801-033 if you have any questions.



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Mail to ACE/AEPC at 19192 Alsea Highway, Alsea OR, 97324.

Or drop this off with the Librarian at the Alsea Library: mark the envelope "ACE/AEPC Phone Application"

You will be contacted to set up a date and time for you to pick up your phone and make arrangements for help with getting signed up for both the counties' alert systems.

ALSEA REGULAR EVENTS CALENDAR

Event	Place	Day	Time	Phone
Alsea Community Effort ACE - Board Meeting	Alsea Library, community room	2nd Tuesday quarterly	5:30pm	Lib. 541-487-5061
Alsea Fire Dept. Board Meeting	Alsea Fire Hall	Last Tuesday monthly	7:00pm	541-487-8701
Alsea Fire Dept. General Meeting		Every Wednesday	7:00pm	
Alsea 4-H Small Animal Club		1 st and 3 rd Thursdays	6:00-7:00pm	541-207-6552
Alsea Wolverine's Booster Club				
Alsea Food Bank - Jeni's Place	Jeni's Place	Every Thursday	10:00 -4:00pm	541-487-3663
Alsea Garden Club	ACF Church	2 nd Saturday monthly	6:00pm	541-487-5191
Men's Bible Study		1 st Saturday monthly	8:00-9:00am	541-487-4442
Alsea HOPE Grange	Grange Hall	1 st Thursday monthly	6:00pm	541-486-4215
Alsea School Board Meeting	School Library	2 nd Wednesday monthly	7:00pm	541-487-4305
Alsea Valley Gleaners - Board Meeting	18889 Haines Road Alsea	Monday following last Thursday monthly	5:30-7:00pm	541-487-5002
Alsea Valley Gleaners Distributions		Every Thursday	10:00-3:00pm	
Stitch & Rip Quilting Club	Various (please call)	Every Monday	10:00-3:00pm	541-487-8011

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