

January - February 2024



# Alsea Valley Voice



**2024 New Year Alsea Crowdad Drop** photo by Bill Baker

## Alea Valley Voice

January-February 2024

Volume 26, No. 1

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### Printed by

Franklin Printing, Corvallis, Oregon

### The Alea Valley Voice is a publication of the Alea Community Effort

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**Alea Valley Voice** (AVV) (USPS Permit No. 135) is published bi-monthly, and free for residence of Alea Oregon and the surrounding communities by Alea Community Effort, 19192 Alea Highway, Alea, Oregon 97324 - a nonprofit 501(c) Organization serving the social and economic needs of our rural community. Preferred periodical postage paid at Alea, Oregon 97324. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in art without written permission is prohibited.

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to ACE /AVV 19192 Alea Highway, Alea, Oregon 97324

### How to contact the AVV:

#### Email

Aleavalleyvoice1@gmail.com

#### Subscription services

Nonresident subscriptions \$25.00 (U.S.) per year: \$25 per year (Foreign).

Prepayment required. Allow 4-8 weeks for first issue.

#### Address changes

Call us at 541-487- 8696 or email info@alseacommunityeffort.org

#### Display advertising inquires

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# Letter From the Editor

By Kathy Adair

As I write this, we are all beginning to thaw our way back to normality. The ice-pocalypse was varying degrees of nerve-wracking, terrifying, annoying, frustrating, and downright dangerous. We are so grateful for the hardworking and brave men and women who put in a lot of effort to restore power, clear roads and driveways, and so much more! You are so appreciated.

In spite of challenging weather conditions, our wonderful community is vibrant with activity. Deb Lindberg has finished her updates to Deb's Café and is back up and running. We had a wonderful downtown holiday display, thanks to Jessi Hunter's inspiration and the support and donations of many in the community. You made our town look so festive! The New Year was celebrated with the Alsea Crawdad Drop, thanks to Bill Baker and friends. What a great way to bring community together to start 2024!!!

In this issue you will find some great information in Musings from the ACE President about a collaboration we did with the Oregon State University's Department of Forestry Ecosystems graduate students. There is a link to the findings of this fascinating study they conducted on ACE's parcel of timber. She also included information about the ACE Art Committee's request for an art project. In these pages there's also an article from Superintendent Krista Nieraeth on the Alsea School District, articles from ACAC and more. While this is a smaller issue than normal, there is still plenty to read.

If you would like to submit an article, please let me know. The next deadline for article submission will be **March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**. This will be for the March/April issue. If you are an organization or business, think about what is coming up that you would like the community to know about and let's get something in the AVV.

As always, if you have questions or article submissions, please don't hesitate to message me on Facebook Messenger or email me at our AVV email – [AlseaValleyVoice1@gmail.com](mailto:AlseaValleyVoice1@gmail.com). Don't forget the "1" on the email. You can also still reach me on my personal email.

## 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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- Please contact me(us) to set up automatic deduction payments

## Musings from the ACE President

A fresh new year and there is much going on in the community (even besides the swirling weather). I'd like to bring the reader's attention to two happenings in this issue.

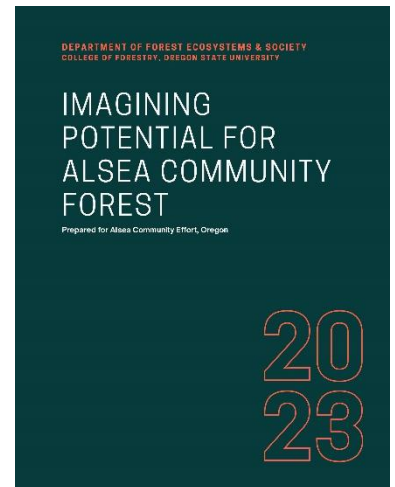
First, graduate students in the Department of Forestry Ecosystems and Society at Oregon State University completed their final report for Alsea Community Effort and our timber parcel off Little Lobster Creek Road. The class that these students participated in is called Interdisciplinary Approaches to Socio-Ecological Problems and is taught by faculty members Reem Hajjar and Jacob Bukoski. The report is nicely written and formatted and includes information about our community forest and ideas for what ACE might do in the future with the parcel. We have now posted the final report on the ACE website so you can read the recommendations for the property that was compiled by students: <https://www.alseacommunityeffort.org/ace-lobster-valleyproject>. You can also read a hard copy of the 60-page document at the Alsea Community Library. We are grateful for the recommendations made by the students and have begun having Board discussions about next steps.

The second ACE happening is that our ACE Art Committee in partnership with the Friends of the Corvallis-Benton County Library are in the midst of a project to commission a new piece of art for the Alsea Community Library. The Friends group provided partial funding for the project. Alsea Resident Kathy Plaza helped the committee envision and plan for the project to ask area artists to design an art piece that will greet patrons as they enter the library, and which embodies the spirit of the Alsea Valley. The Art Committee will be accepting designs for the project through January 31<sup>st</sup>. Once the ideas are gathered, the Art Committee, Alsea Library staff, and the ACE Board will choose a winning design. The artist, or group of artists will then have until the end of May to create and install the permanent exhibit. You can read more details about the project in the "Call for Artists" document that is also posted on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/alseacall>

Also, a couple of kudos to share. Thank you, Naomi Shadwick, for managing our website and posting new documents including all past 2023 issues of the Alsea Valley Voice. Thank you to Eddy Provost for putting up a new mailbox for ACE in front of the library.

The ACE board welcomes ideas, suggestions, concerns and questions about community events or ideas for community building. Please send ideas through postal mail (to our new mailbox at 19192 Alsea Highway, Alsea, OR 97324 or drop off comments and notes in our comment box inside the library building.

Meredith Howell, ACE President



## Town Meeting Update

The 1/17 Town Hall Commissioner's Corner Meeting with Representative David Gomberg, Benton County Commissioner Xan Augerot and Lincoln County Commissioner Casey Miller was cancelled due to weather. We are working on rescheduling this for February or March and then will post on Facebook and mail out meeting notice to Alsea residents.

## Alsea Kitchen Club update

By Emily Blake

Established in December 2023, Alsea Kitchen Club continues into the new year!

You know those one-on-one conversations where you swap tips on recipes, canning, meal prep, saving on groceries, harvesting your garden, best local food sources... all that? We meet up each month to swap those kitchen tips!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/alseakitchenclub>

Meetings are the 2nd Sunday of each month at the Alsea Library 2-4pm. Every meetup is fun discussion and a theme. Possible upcoming themes include:

- Natural remedies you can make in your kitchen
- Getting out of the rut: new ideas for dinner
- Starting your spring garden
- Herbs and spices



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## Blood Drive



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## Library Lines

by Kathy Koetz

Winter has really set in as I write this. It is cold and wet out. Now all I want to do is curl up with a book by my fire and read. And I have a lot of books to choose from! We have changed out all of our paperbacks and most of the Large Print. We also have been getting some New Fiction for the front shelves. And our DVDs are always being refreshed! We have a new display of Valentine's Day books and movies too!

Lego Day in January was a big hit! Don't miss the next on February 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:30. Join in and build something fantastic! This afterschool program is great fun for kids and adults alike. Food, fun and friendship, what more could you ask of a program?

Also, on Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, we will have the Mobile Maker Space ladies here. Stay tuned to our Facebook page and/or bulletin boards to see what interesting stuff we will be doing.

We have beautiful art on our walls and in our display case by Stephanie Adams. If you haven't yet been in to see it, come on down! Stephanie does acrylic art and super fun wooden flower arrangements. She is planning to have a resin/acrylic workshop soon if there is interest. Call or email the library if you are interested:

[Alsea5061@gmail.com](mailto:Alsea5061@gmail.com) or 541-487-5061.

Dates to remember:

February 6<sup>th</sup> Legos! 3:30-4:30

February 27<sup>th</sup> Mobile Maker 3:30-5

March 5<sup>th</sup> Legos! 3:30-4:30

I'm A Little Penguin



# Reviving the Alsea Citizens Advisory Committee

By Mimi Stout, Committee Chairman

In 1970, the State of Oregon created the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) for the purpose of preserving farm and forest land and for planning the use of all the rural land in the state held in private ownership. The intention of the LCDC was for people who live or own land in rural areas to be involved in writing the comprehensive plan for land use in their own counties. At that time, the Benton County Planning Department held meetings and elections in various areas of the county and created the Citizens Advisory Committees for various geographical locations in (CACs).

Over the years, the Alsea CAC has held many meetings and attended planning commission hearings usually in support of Alsea Citizens. These activities were instrumental in getting approval for the Alsea Clinic, the Alsea Assisted Living Home, the Alsea Christian Fellowship Church, the Alsea Library, and use of some farmland for Alsea School's former baseball team.

Benton County is currently planning to update their Comprehensive Plan. In response to this project and to concerns heard from our town, the Benton County Community Development Department (formerly the Planning Department and the Building Department) has requested that we reactivate the Alsea CAC. To do this we need to elect three new committee members. It looks like Monday evenings will be the best time for meetings. We are hoping that part of the meetings can be done over zoom. All the meetings will be open to the public to present their ideas. At this point we are waiting for the county to name the date for us to hold elections.



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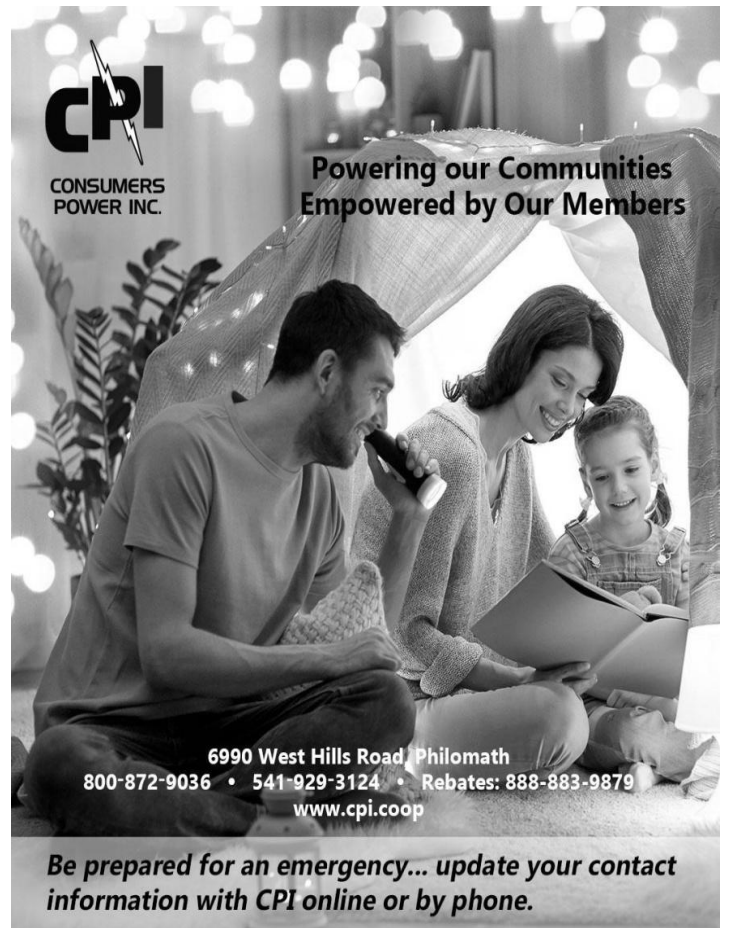
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## ACAC Update

January 16, 2024

By Sara Cash, Project Coordinator



What a winter wonderland we have had the past few days! (irony intended) I will keep this update brief as I am trying to get this off to Kathy Adair while my power is on again. 'Cause who knows when it will be off, or on, again! Following is a brief update on current projects of Alsea Community Action Collaborative (ACAC). If you would like further information on any of these topics or need other assistance from ACAC, please contact Sara Cash at [acac97324@gmail.com](mailto:acac97324@gmail.com) or call/text 541-602-7819, or Naomi Shadwick at [shadwick@casco.net](mailto:shadwick@casco.net). We continue to focus our limited resources on our stated purpose *to create a community where our kids can build bright futures through community-based projects that enhance safety, stability, and sustainability.*

**Clinic closure:** For more information from the community conversations in December about the clinic closure, look for another article on that topic in this issue. As a result of those conversations, ACAC has facilitated the creation of a workgroup around the topic of reopening the Alsea Health Clinic. There has been one meeting with the Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties (BHC). The crux of the issue seems to be that due to their legal structure, Benton Health Centers cannot provide the type of medical care and attention that Alsea residents used to receive when the clinic was locally managed. This obstacle is compounded by the fact the BHC is hugely overbudget for the fiscal year. The workgroup plans to meet again to explore how the county might be able to provide reduced services at the clinic while the option of reopening the clinic with local management or as a satellite of a nearby rural health clinic is explored. ACAC through the sponsorship of Alsea Community Effort is seeking grant funding for an economic feasibility study on reopening the clinic. Keep your eyes and ears out for more information to come on this important project.

**Alsea Citizens Advisory Committee:** ACAC has been working closely with Alsea Citizens Advisory Committee Chairman Mimi Stout and the director of Benton County's Community Development Department, Darren Nichols, to reconvene this committee to serve as a vital voice for Alsea at the county level. Benton County plans to rewrite the county wide 30-year planning documents, which will allow Alsea to petition concerning land use issues.

This committee is meant to advocate for the vision that the Alsea community has for our shared future. Look for upcoming meeting announcements, which will include an **election of at least three new committee members**. Alsea Facebook, Alsea Valley Voice if possible, and a possible flyer will give dates for that meeting and details of how the election will be managed. An initial meeting to relaunch the committee at the Alsea Library on December 8<sup>th</sup> was well attended, showing that people have lots of ideas and interest in land use issues in Alsea. Darren Nichols and Toby Lewis, Floodplain Administrator/Senior Planner, were in attendance from Benton County Community Development.

**Government Corner:** Sadly, the Government Corner planned for January 17<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to inclement weather and road conditions. This meeting will be rescheduled for February or March. Again, look to local communication outlets for details on the upcoming meeting.



Continued from previous page

**Benton County Planning Commission:** Sara Cash, Project Coordinator for ACAC, has been appointed to the Benton County Planning Commission to represent West Benton County. Please reach out to me with your concerns at [acac97324@gmail.com](mailto:acac97324@gmail.com) or 541-602-7819.

**Alsea Health Clinic Survey:** Many thanks to those of you who responded to the Alsea Health Clinic Survey. This was meant to be an informal survey to see if the community wants ACAC to focus our limited energy, attention, and resources to advocate for the reopening of the clinic. I want to personally thank all of you who took the time to respond, especially for the handwritten notes of encouragement and wisdom. Huge thanks also to Emily Blake for overseeing the IT end of this project. The responses to the survey were overwhelmingly in support of reopening the clinic with the ability to be able to “walk in “for minor health services without having to be a registered patient at the clinic.



Alsea Community Action Collaborative

Safety  
Stability  
Sustainability

ACAC IS A PROJECT UNDER THE ACE NONPROFIT

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## Alsea School District Update

**Krista Nieraeth, M.Ed.**

*Superintendent, K - 6 Principal, and Special Education Director*

We are at the end of our first semester of school! The staff and students have been working hard and we are proud of the efforts to make Alsea School District the best it can be.

The major theme for our 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of school is "ATTENDANCE MATTERS." Students who attend school at a rate of 90% or better will do better in school. We want our students to be at school ON TIME, EACH AND EVERY DAY. Please remember that school starts at 8am, with breakfast being served at 7:40am. We will be recognizing those students who attend school 90% or more of the time at a districtwide attendance assembly in February. We will continue to recognize those students each semester. It is important for students to attend school regularly.

Congratulations to the following football players for being honored on the Oregon 6 Man All-State Football Team:

Gavan Hinchberger – 1<sup>st</sup> Team Returner

Ethan Cantrell – 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Linebacker; Honorable Mention Center

Tanner Hibbs – Honorable Mention Receiver

Parker Crowe – Honorable Mention Running Back

Our welding classes are selling student made portable firepits. The cost for a standard firepit is \$125 or a custom one can be ordered for \$180-\$200. If you have questions or want more information, please contact Mr. Stevens at [seth.stevens@alsea.k12.or.us](mailto:seth.stevens@alsea.k12.or.us) or at (541) 487-4305.

The School Board is looking for community members who are interested in volunteering for the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee is an advisory group that provides budget advice and direction, examines the District's entire budget for the upcoming year, and recommends a budget to the Board. If you are a community member who lives within the boundaries of the Alsea School District and are interested in applying to become a member of the Budget Committee, please email Lora Nickle, Executive Secretary, at [lora.nickle@alsea.k12.or.us](mailto:lora.nickle@alsea.k12.or.us). Applications will be due to Ms. Nickle by March 7<sup>th</sup> at 4pm and will be reviewed by the School Board at their March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Appointments will be made at that time. The first budget meeting will be held in late April.

Again, the district is updating our emailing lists. If you would like to receive updates from the school district regarding school activities and business, please email Nathan Roberts at [nathan.roberts@alsea.k12.or.us](mailto:nathan.roberts@alsea.k12.or.us) to get your email and name on our list!

For the most up to date information about the happenings at Alsea School District, please be sure to visit our website at [www.alsea.k12.or.us](http://www.alsea.k12.or.us) or follow us on Facebook.

ASD 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Class





ASD Basketball Team



ASD Christmas Jammies



ASD Gingerbread



ASD Reading

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## A message from Benton County Community Development about flood plain mapping:

As discussed at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Alsea Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting, the flood hazard mapping in the Alsea watershed needs updating and several agencies – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Land Conservation and Development, US Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, and Oregon Emergency Management – are aware of this.

### Flood Hazard Remapping Project Information

FEMA is currently leading a project to update the flood hazard mapping for most of Benton County, including the Alsea area. Some key things to know about the project are:

- It's a large project that also includes neighboring counties.
- Because of its size, this project is expected to take 8-10 years from start to finish.
- We are about 2 years into the project.
- The landscape and development have changed quite a bit in some places since the original studies were done in the mid- to late 1970's which means some areas will be removed from the flood hazard zones and some areas will be newly shown as high flood risk.
- FEMA, as well as their consultants and partner agencies, are committed to ensuring that the revised maps are based on current data and are as accurate as they can reasonably be.
- If you have historical knowledge and/or photographs of past flood events, please send that information to me so that I can make sure FEMA has access to it; this kind of information is helpful for checking the accuracy of the models.

You can find out more about this project – and the additional hazards that are being considered – on this website:

<https://fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2cb7015d2cf94515a4cb745ffba056d4>

- The information on the site is divided into six categories.
- Click on any of the topics along the blue bar at the top of the page.
- The most helpful tab for flood hazard mapping is: **Estimated Floodplains (2020.06)**.

### Preliminary Flood Hazard Map Information

- The preliminary flood mapping that I mentioned in the meeting is located on the **Estimated Floodplains (2020.06)** tab.

Please aid in this project by asking questions and sending in local knowledge about flooding in and around the Alsea community. Contact at Benton County for this project is Toby Lewis, Floodplain Administrator/Senior Planner for Benton County Community Development. Her contacts are 541-766-6819 or [toby.lewis@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:toby.lewis@bentoncountyor.gov)

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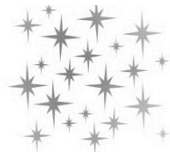


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## 'Twas the Season



Alsea Christmas spirit was off to a grand start with a tree lighting in Clark Park the evening of December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The town gathering was due to the creative mind of an Alsea local. Serving up hot cocoa during the festive event, Jessi Hunter, owner and barista of Little Heifer Coffee Co., recalled, "I thought it would be a great idea to get the community together and get us all in the holiday spirit!"

A few weeks prior, Jessi had reached out and was able to secure a donated tree from Starker Forests Inc. Next, she posted on Facebook to inform the town of her idea and get the interest and excitement flowing. And so it did, as approximately 100 townsfolk came out to enjoy the lights and each other and even sing a few Christmas songs led by Pastor David Pollard of Alsea Christian Fellowship. In addition, a few 'lighted' horses and horse gals rode into town as well!

Earlier that day, the park had been festively decorated by Aerica Neeland with the Alsea Garden Club, and some of Jessi's Christmas lawn ornaments as well. A big thank you goes out to Matt Clark for the use of the park!

Joyful to see young and old come out for the tree lighting, Jessi, stirring a cup of hot chocolate for an eager youngster, said, "I'm so happy I could cry!" With the turnout, it's safe to say another Alsea Christmas tree lighting will be in the works for this year.

When travelling through Alsea during the week, stop by and grab your favorite cuppa from Little Heifer Coffee Co! Usually open Tuesday through Saturday 6AM to 4PM, Jessi Hunter can be found serving up yummy coffee drinks and more next to John Boy's Mercantile along Main Street.

~ Mystie Munsey



## New CTE Building to Begin Construction Soon!

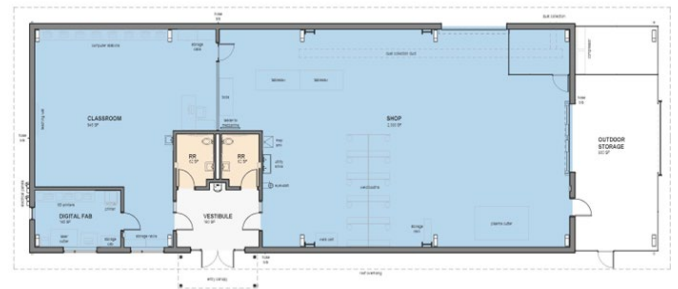
We are very excited to share that the new Alsea School CTE building will begin construction soon! You may recall from our last notice that the District had pre-qualified three good construction firms for this project. In early January we received bids from all three companies and Todd Construction provided the low bid and is now under contract. Their bid is within the current budget and they expect to complete the building this fall.

The construction plans are still in review with the County, and we anticipate receiving approval for permits this month. Final coordination of the construction details is proceeding and we expect to see Todd mobilize early this spring.

Because of the nature of the building, there will be times when a lot of equipment and materials will be coming into town and being placed on the east side of the playground. We expect to send out notices on days when there will be increased traffic and/or lots of noise.

Our community has been very patient with this long process and we appreciate your continued support as construction begins.

For more information regarding construction, please feel free to contact Nancy Giggy at [nancy@imsoregon.com](mailto:nancy@imsoregon.com)



Alsea High School - CTE Building  
Alsea School District  
November 9, 2023

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Soderstrom Architects

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# Health Navigator at Alsea Library Weekly (mostly)

Oscar Monroy, Health Navigator, is at Alsea Library most Thursdays from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Although you can just drop by to talk with him, it is a good idea to call the library to see if he will be there. If you need a specific time slot, contact 541-766-2130 to make an appointment to meet with him or another Health Navigator. Health Navigation is available in person at the library on Thursday afternoons or by phone other times during the week. The Alsea Library has cards with contact information for Oscar and the Health Navigation team across the CHC system.

Oscar can help with accessing many other services besides arranging CHC appointments. If would like to become an established patient at any CHC location, bring your insurance card to expedite the registration process. He can also help people complete applications for the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid), Social Security Disability, Medicare, food programs, and utility assistance. He can also help access programs for installing a ramp or other assistive devices to make a home safer and more accessible for the elderly and/or disabled.

Prescriptions: If you are not signed up for alternative delivery for your CHC based prescriptions to come to your house, Oscar can bring them out to the Alsea Library for you to pick up on Thursday afternoons. Please contact Oscar at 541-766-2130 or in person at the library, so this information can be communicated to the BHC pharmacy in Corvallis.

Transportation: Oscar and other Health Navigators can help CHC patients arrange for transportation to and from health care appointments outside Alsea. Another option for transportation is through volunteer faith-based organizations like Volunteer Caregivers of Albany. Yes, they will come out to Alsea and pick people up and bring them home! To schedule a ride, you need to have the time, duration of visit, and address for your appointment.



## Health Navigation

We support your insurance needs and can connect you with local resources!

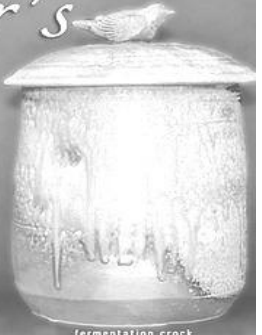


Oscar Monroy  
Health Navigator


Alsea Community Library  
Every Thursday, 1:00 - 5:00 pm

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# REGULAR EVENTS CALENDAR

EVENT/NAME	LOCATION	DAY	TIME	PHONE NUMBER
Alsea Community Effort Board Meeting	Online - Zoom	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs Monthly	6:30pm	541-487-5061
Alsea Fire Dept. Board Meeting	Alsea Fire Hall	Last Tues Monthly	7:00pm	541-487-8701
Alsea Fire Dept. General Meeting		Wednesdays	7:00pm	
Alsea 4-H Small Animal Club		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs Monthly	6:00pm	541-207-6552
Alsea Wolverines Booster Club				503-740-9639
Alsea Food Bank	Jeni's Place	Thursdays	10:00am-4:00pm	541-487-3663
Alsea Garden Club	ACF Church	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat Monthly	12:00pm	541-760-3856
Men's Bible Study	ACF Church	1 <sup>st</sup> Sat Monthly	8:00am	541-487-4442
Alsea HOPE Grange	Grange Hall	1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs Monthly	6:00pm	541-486-4215
Line Dance Class		Mondays	6:00pm	541-452-1919
Alsea School Board Meeting	School Library	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs Monthly	7:00pm	541-487-4305
Alsea Valley Gleaners Distribution	18889 Haines Rd	Fridays	2:00pm-7:00pm	503-951-2499
Stitch and Rip Quilting Club	Various (please call)	Mondays	10:00am-3:00pm	541-487-8011
Alsea Kitchen Club	Alsea Library	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun Monthly	2:00-4:00pm	503-255-8055

## ALSEA VALLEY VOICE

Alsea Community Effort  
19192 Alsea Highway  
Alsea, OR 97324

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**January - February 2024**