

# Our Story

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A foundation because stuff happens.

In the early morning of November 8, 2018, the first plume of the deadliest wildfire in California history was seen over the west shores of Lake Almanor. Over the next 48 hours and the weeks that followed 100's of evacuees sought refuge here. The people of the Lake Almanor Basin stepped up to assist with raising over \$35,000, establishing an evacuation center, a system for vetting needs and distributing funds. We were caught flat-footed but were glad we were able to serve.

The next disaster came COVID-19 in 2021 and once again, without resources or funds and few volunteers, the community went to work quickly creating a needs assessment, a 24-hour help line and a shopping service for those most vulnerable.

It was evident that our community needed to put resources and systems in place because stuff happens.

## **Taking Action**

In October of 2020 a small group gathered to discuss creating a foundation to provide the resources for the community to address challenges and lay plans for the future. This became the Steering Committee for the foundation and with needs, feasibility and goals confirmed, a mission was defined, bylaws adopted, and Articles of Incorporation for The Almanor Foundation were filed December 2020.

In March 2021, the North Valley Community Foundation of Butte County, accepted The Almanor Foundation as a Fund within their organization to allow us to receive donations and contributions while awaiting the approval of our 501c3 charitable status. In February of 2022 The Almanor Foundation received 501c3 status and continues to partner with NVCF on common goals.



## **Mission**

The Almanor Foundation creates opportunities for community development as stewards of initiatives and projects that unify individuals, groups and organizations who have a common goal to create a better, more sustainable and rewarding quality of life for those who reside in the Greater Lake Almanor Basin.

The Foundation inspires ideas, takes action and creates funding opportunities through hosting events and applying for grants to ensure our vision and mission are realized.

## **Objectives**

- Focus in the near term on the Greater Lake Almanor Basin, which includes Canyon Dam, Greenville, Westwood, Clear Creek and Indian Valley.
- Serve families and youth in our geographic community through grants to organizations.
- Meet specific community needs through philanthropic projects.
- Receive funds from philanthropist focused on general community needs and specific community improvement projects.
- Address community challenges, even disasters, through collaboration with individuals and organizations.
- Identify, with others, new ideas and efforts that spur our communities into prosperity and responsible growth.

*The* **Almanor Foundation**

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# Our Initiatives

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## **The Almanor Basin Community Consortium**

The Almanor Basin Community Consortium was formed in 2019. The Consortium and its sector meetings are to become platforms for the mixing and sharing of ideas, visions and projects of the different organizations, businesses, and peoples of the Lake Almanor Basin to produce a vision for our future, enhance our quality of life, and work toward creative solutions to our current and future challenges.

## **The Town Plaza**

The Town Plaza is an initiative for the advancement of community health, education, and cultural and recreational opportunities. The Town Plaza will be a community destination that will feature educational events, music, festivals, craft fairs, children's activities, cultural performances, and public art.

As an economic development driver, it will contain a public market space that will create opportunities for various food and retail entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses. As an event and year-round activities location it will become a regional destination that will bring residents as well as travelers into the Town of Chester, stimulating the economy of the town.

## **Workforce Housing**

The shortage of housing and shortage of affordable housing is threatening the livelihood and character of our region, our community members, and our businesses. The goal of The Almanor Foundation is to bring people together to accelerate solutions to achievable local housing, supporting short-term and immediate action, while focusing on long-term solutions.

In August 2022 the foundation funded a 6-month project to produce a comprehensive and systematic approach to affordable housing within the Lake Almanor Basin. The path forward will look at each of the stakeholders in the process and evaluate where



and when each can affect change toward a shared vision of increasing the affordable housing stock. This process will look to create an educational road map to understand the process of housing from financing to occupancy that reveals the interdependencies of each industry and stakeholder. Our goal through this process is to map the ecosystem that is housing and highlight where change can be made via influence or control of each of the stakeholders.

### **Wildfire Relief & Recovery**

Our Wildfire Fund supports rebuilding and revitalization of communities impacted by wildfire.

Tragically, the wildfires have become more dangerous, happen more frequently and are incredibly destructive in recent years. More specifically, our region has suffered immensely. The impact of these fires has been felt by everyone in our region, and it will take many years of collaborative work for us to rebuild and revitalize homes, health, and wellbeing for all of our neighbors.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with the nonprofit, government, philanthropic and private sectors to accelerate recovery and rebuilding to create a thriving, resilient and even stronger region.

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# Our Funds

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## **Seneca Health Care District, Back the Build**

The future of the Seneca Healthcare District Hospital is at a crossroads. The existing building, now over 69 years old, is nearing its end of life. The aging building does not meet current seismic safety building standards according to Senate Bill 1953. Renovating the existing structure to bring it up to current requirements would cost as much or more than building a new facility.

## **Carlos Espana Memorial Fund, Almanor Rail Trail Project**

The vision of the Trails Committee is to establish a continuous recreation corridor around the lake and east to the Bizz Johnson Trail in Lassen County. The committee has worked with federal, private and commercial landowners to link a system of informal trails around the Lake Almanor Basin that will provide healthy, outdoor recreational opportunities for hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians.

The Almanor Rail Trail is a 12-mile segment of this master plan, beginning in Chester and following the Collins Pine Rail Trail through the Olsen Barn Meadow, across the Causeway, along Lake Almanor and ending at Clear Creek Junction and Highway 147. Donated funds will be dedicated to the completion of this trail and ongoing maintenance.

## **Defend Lake Almanor Project Fund**

The Defend Lake Almanor project fund supports the efforts to defend, preserve and protect the ecology, environment and economy of Lake Almanor from any adverse decisions made on behalf of the relicensing of Project 2105: Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project by the Federal Energy Resources Commission (FERC).

## **Chester Cemetery Rebuild Fund**

The Chester Cemetery was burnt over during the Dixie Fire of 2021. The Cemetery District is working to rebuild cemetery with trees and foliage for the families of the community



### **Lake Almanor Area Chamber Fireworks Fund**

The Chamber hosts two Fireworks Spectacular events each year over the skies of Lake Almanor and Chester. One on the 4th of July off the Lake Almanor Peninsula, the other over Rogers Field (Chester Airport) on New Year's Eve. This fund allows tax deductible donations to these two important events to the community and visitors to the area.

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# Why Open a TAF Fund?

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If you are reading this, you most likely have an idea, a vision, or a project that you think will benefit your community. You want to make a positive change. You want to serve. And you question the best way to go about it. Opening a fund at The Almanor Foundation (TAF) will allow you to make that positive change, and your dream a reality quickly and effectively.

## What you get when you open a fund at TAF

When you open a fund at TAF you are given the freedom to work the project and build your dream without the costs and administrative hours that come with it. You are put into the driver's seat of your project without the need to hire expertise in administration and accounting. Instead, you can immediately begin to raise the money you need to do the work that you envision, and without needing to form your own non-profit organization.

## How TAF works

TAF charges an administrative fee to our funds. This fee makes it possible for us to offer the financial, marketing, and procedural support and systems that funds need to thrive. All without the recurring expense of building out those resources on your own.

## How to get Started

First connect with TAF staff via [\(this form\)](#). Our staff will listen to your ideas and share the ways that we can help.

We offer a variety of funds that include donor-advised funds, scholarship funds, memorial funds and impact funds that allow you to raise charitable dollars to support an organization or a cause.



## 5% Fund - What We Do

### Provide Financial Services:

- Online portal
- Accept donations
- Accept grants
- Tax receipts to donors
- Financial & contribution reports
- TAF Tax return
- TAF Outside financial review
- Up to 10 check/month

### Marketing Services:

- Individualized fundraising web page
- Online donation capabilities
- The Almanor Foundation branding
- Social media announcement of fund
- Newsletter announcement of fund

## 5% Fund - What You Do

- Raise money for your cause
- Make grants
- Host events
- Raise awareness
- Fund projects subject to TAF approval process
- Donor communication & follow-up

## 10% Fund - What We Do

### All of the above plus:

### Marketing Services:

- Access to ticketing and event portal

### Insurance

- Event & permit coverage
- General liability

## 10% Fund - What You Do

- Raise money for your cause
- Make grants
- Host events
- Raise awareness
- Fund projects subject to TAF approval process
- Donor communication & follow-up

## 15% Fund - What We Do

### All of the above plus:

### Marketing Services:

- Additional public relations related to campaign, event, or fund

### Professional consultation

## 15% Fund - What You Do

- Raise money for your cause
- Make grants
- Host events
- Raise awareness
- Fund projects subject to TAF approval process
- Donor communication & follow-up



# Board of Directors

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## **Judy Chynoweth, Chair**

Judy, a resident of Chester part or full time since 1997, has served on several area non-profit boards including the ABC Center, Plumas Rural Services and Plumas Arts. Her skills in facilitation, board training, strategic planning and results accountability have been a huge asset to The Almanor Foundation.

## **Julie Childers, Treasurer**

Julie moved to Lake Almanor in 2001. She has over 30 years of accounting experience retiring as controller of Collins Pine and has served on the board of directors of the ABC Center in Chester as well as Plumas Rural Services and the Lassen Association at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

## **Carla Parsons, Secretary**

Carla has been in the financial services industry for 41 years and has been a financial advisor for 24 years working with clients at her Edward Jones office in Chester. She has lived in Chester since 1988 and is an active member of the Lake Almanor Elks Lodge.

## **Joyce Ruschhaupt, Director**

Joyce a resident since 2006 is a estate broker and has served on the California Association of Realtors State Board, the Plumas Association of Realtors, the American Cancer Society State Board, the American Lung Association, Central Valley Community Hospitals Foundation and currently co-chairs the Elks Christmas Angels.

## **Jeff Benedictson, Director**

Jeff and wife, Dianne moved their dentistry practice to Lake Almanor from Reno, NV in 2020. Having fallen in love with the rural lifestyle and close knit community of the area, they opened a state-of-the-art practice for the area and quickly became involved in non-profit work to support their new home.

## **Tom Greely, Director**

Dr. Thomas Greely a family medicine doctor in Concord, California in practice for over 20 years, was affiliated with multiple hospitals, including John Muir Health-Concord Medical Center and John Muir Health-Walnut Creek Medical Center. Recently retired he lives at Lake Almanor with partner Cliff Fahy.



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# Support Team

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## **Susan Bryner, Executive Director**

Susan's family has lived in the Lake Almanor area since the 1970's. She moved to the family home full time in 2003 opening a bookstore in Chester and becoming active in the Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce. She is the co-owner of Coldwell Banker Kehr/O'Brien Real Estate and is a founding director of the Feather River Tourism Association, currently serving as Vice Chair.

## **Melissa Lopez, Operations Manager**

Melissa was raised in the San Francisco Bay area, graduated from CSU Monterey Bay and moved to Plumas County with her two children and husband in 2020. She began her professional career in the Special Education field before moving to the nonprofit sector where she was the Program Director of MEarth, an environmental education nonprofit. There she started an internship program for high school and middle school youth, led several fundraising events a year, and grew and managed youth programming. Melissa is on the Board of the Feather River Co-op and is Secretary of Plumas County Children's Council.

## **Katherine Sansone, Consultant, Sansone+ PR & Marketing**

Katherine, a new local, having moved to Lake Almanor full-time in 2019, has been coming to the lake since she was a child. As the founder and principal of SANSONE+ PR & MARKETING since 1986, Katherine remains busy with clients such as The Almanor Foundation while participating and contributing to her new community. Katherine volunteers on the development committee for the Town Plaza and is Chair of the Lake Almanor Community Foundation for the LACC community.

## **Josie Litchfield, Consultant, Kata Marketing**

As a small business owner for 20 years and a freelance digital marketing pro, Josie brings to her clients a deep understanding of the need for social media marketing for non-profits. Josie and her husband also own and operate Wild Plumas, a glamping campground in Indian Valley.

