

Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place

Intergenerational Magic

Who hasn't watched a five-year-old race down the street and thought: "I wish I could have that kind of energy...." Though we can't turn back the clock, we seniors can benefit from exposure to the vitality, enthusiasm, and sense of wonder of the younger generation.



Twenty-year Paonia Elementary School teacher Jodi Simpson sits between two kindergarten boys on the left; volunteer Janice Thorup is shown rear-center with a blond girl on her lap.

For years Janice Thorup has been a regular volunteer for Jodi Simpson's classes at Paonia Elementary School. Jodi has taught at PES for twenty years, beginning with twelve years inspiring 1st-graders. When Jodi switched to second grade, Janice became a "Reading Buddy," then began helping the students write stories. Now, with Jodi teaching a class of twenty-nine kindergartners, Janice volunteers three times a week, helping students to create a story that is acted out by up to six classmates.

"The kids have such big hearts--they don't see age, don't see wrinkles, don't mind if we can't remember things. That's the benefit to us. What we have to give them is love. And that is so very easy to give because they are all the way open--not self-conscious or guarded. They let you in."

In his book *How to Live Forever: The Enduring*

Power of Connecting the Generations, author Marc Freedman highlights the importance of social connections between old and young. Such activities can stimulate learning, increase emotional support, and improve health among older adults. The interactions help the community, too, by maximizing financial resources, expanding services, and inspiring collaboration.

In the first of what may become an annual joint endeavor, Jodi Simpson's kindergartners recently created one-of-a-kind holiday cards for North Fork Senior Connections to send to members. Currently Senior Connections is involved with older students who will interview long-time local residents who've reached the age of sixty-five and are willing to share their experiences.

Aging Creatively on Temporary Hiatus—The Aging Creatively program will be taking a monthlong break from Thursday programming. On January 20 Mary Gandt's art class will resume the series, followed by a Game Day on January 27. These open-to-all activities take place at 10AM, followed by reservation-only lunches intended primarily for those who take part in the programs. On February 3, Liz Bucy will lead her "Healthy Steps" class, a fun and gentle program that was a hit in November. Call 970 527-6610 to reserve your spot.



NFSC joined Paonia's Holiday Festivities on Saturday, December 4, with an outdoor open house in front of the Senior Center. Thanks to all our great volunteers who baked cookies and handed out hot Wassail, letting folks know about all the local opportunities for seniors.

January 2022



NEWS

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January Birthdays



Happy Birthday to:

Christine Palafox - 1/2	Carol Schott - 1/3
Dave Knutson - 1/5	John Valentine - 1/9
Georgia Finnigan - 1/10	Sherrion Taylor - 1/17
Maridell Rose - 1/18	Karen Bacon - 1/19
Bobbie Selk - 1/22	Susan Capps - 1/24
Lois Doll - 1/27	Laura Lee Yates - 1/27

Do you love to laugh? Want to connect with other seniors, express yourself creatively and have a lot of fun? Paonia Players director Merrily Talbott invites you to an interest meeting for Senior Follies, a musical comedy variety show. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 25th, 11:30 am

at the Senior Center. Whether you like to sing, dance, act, tell jokes, or work behind the scenes fundraising, making sets, costumes or props, Paonia Players wants you involved! Email paoniaplayers@gmail.com for more information.

Calendar

What's Happening in the North Fork Valley in December

NEW for 2022: Monday Morning Coffee Klatch— Join us at the Paonia Senior Center on Monday, Jan 3, 9:30, for coffee, tea, and lively conversation!

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) Exercise and fall prevention classes presented by the North Fork EMS:

Paonia Senior Center – Tues & Fri at 10-11 am
Hotchkiss Memorial Hall – Mon & Thurs, 10 am
Crawford Town Hall (Advanced) Tues & Thurs
5:30-6:30 pm

Aging Creatively! Thursday programs on hiatus until Jan 20 - see article

Book Club for Seniors – 1/17/22 @ 1:30 pm Paonia Senior Center. This month's choice is "Indian Givers" by Jack Weatherford.

Write Your Life-Memoir Writing Wednesdays at 1:30-3:00. For more information contact Yuri Chivovsky at yurichivovsky@gmail.com

Senior Lunch – Senior Centers open for Lunch (also Available for Pick-up) M,W & F: Call Debbie at (970) 874 - 7661 for more information or to sign up.

Caregivers' Support Group Thursdays, 1 – 3 pm via Zoom. Contact Dr. Jess Deegan for information at 970-510-0724 or drdeeganii@gmail.com