

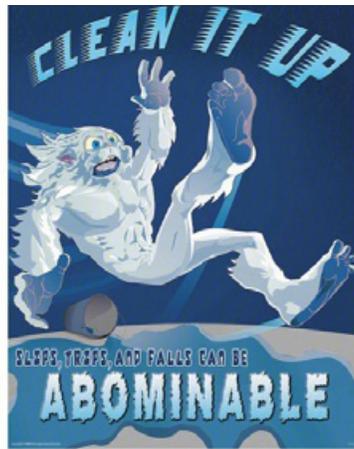
Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place

Winter Wonderland?

Is winter your favorite season? Bravo! Glistening snow with skies of deep dry Colorado blue are glorious, especially for skiers. But for many of us, winter's a challenge to be met, and aging doesn't make it any easier.

Falls are the #1 cause of injury in older adults, and ice adds an extra layer of peril. Dogs with their four-paw-drive navigate winter conditions with ease, but just as you may purchase studded tires for your car, consider traction devices (such as YakTrax) for your own two feet if you're out exercising, especially with a dog at the end of a leash. If you use a cane, make sure the rubber tip isn't worn smooth, or add an attachment that works as an ice-pick; boots with non-skid soles can help prevent slipping. The North Fork EMS sponsors wonderful free SAIL classes—"Stay Active and Independent for Life"—at three North Fork locations, offering evidence-based strength, balance and fitness programs for older adults.

Of course, it's recommended you keep walkways clear—but don't forget your heart works double-time to keep you warm in the cold and snow-shoveling can also be hazardous for those with osteoporosis or balance issues. Ask your health provider if it's a safe activity for you. Those at high risk should reach out to family, friends, or neighbors, and if that's not successful, the folks at North Fork Senior Connections may be able to help members find a "snow buddy."



When it's really cold, beware of frostbite. Poor circulation magnifies the danger, so bundle up, even if it gives you the silhouette of a Yeti, especially protecting the areas farthest from your heart. If you're outside for an extended period and your body temperature drops to a dangerous level, hypothermia can occur. To combat this, stay dry with plenty of layers, wearing a hat, gloves or mittens, and a scarf to shield nose and mouth, limiting exposure.

In winter few things appeal more than a crackling fire. Yet not only fireplaces but gas stoves and space heaters can cause fires and/or leak hazardous amounts of carbon monoxide—invisible, odorless, and deadly. Make sure there are no flammable objects or furniture within 3 feet of your (monitored) space heater and that you've cleaned and properly vented these devices. Our Board Vice-Chair Bonnie Eisenberg and her husband John Young have been called out the last three weekends as the Disaster Action Team for the Red Cross, supporting local residents who've suffered house fires.

*** For our members: Bonnie and John can also install a free "never-change-the-battery" smoke alarm through the Red Cross!

Driving in winter is challenging for all ages. Make sure your car is ready for inclement weather: antifreeze, tires, and windshield wipers need attention. Stock emergency supplies like a first aid kit, blankets, windshield scraper, shovel, flashlight, water and food; consider a bag of rock salt, sand, or cat litter in case your tires spin.

Advance planning can make all the difference. CDOT—the Colorado Department of Transportation—can keep you abreast of current road conditions and help you reroute for safe-

continued next page

Winter Wonderland? - continued

ty. When a winter storm is forecast, try to stay off the roads, and make sure in advance that you have a supply of necessary medications on hand and adequate groceries. Then it's all about cozy: you can stay home, watch the snow fall, and perhaps take the time to read that book you received for the Holidays. Enjoy!

We're Getting a Raise! All seniors on Social Security will find a nice surprise in their check this month as the SSA is giving us all an 8.2% increase. This could mean another \$100 or more in your pocket each month.

A Heartfelt Thank You to everyone who responded to our recent request for donations to help us keep North Fork Senior Connections running. Because of staff turnover last year, we were not able to apply for some foundation funding that we might otherwise have gotten. This means our finances will be a bit tight for the first part of the year until we can get back into the funding cycle. Your support as we get through this shortfall is greatly appreciated.

Welcome new Members and Volunteers Senior Connections membership is free and open to all 65 and above. Volunteers are neighbors of any age who wish to assist the senior population to stay healthy, adequately fed, socially connected, and comfortably living in their homes. In collaboration with the Paonia Senior Center and other community partners, a variety of programs and classes are scheduled each week throughout the area. Many are taught by our members and all are free, although donations to help cover our costs are greatly appreciated. We hope you will join us.

"Ghost Story" - A Dose of Suspense



January's free Senior Movie on Thursday, January 12, at 10AM will keep you on the edge of your Paradise Theater seat. The supernatural horror film from 1981 stars Fred Astaire, Melvyn Douglas, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and John House-

man as four elderly men, members of the Chowder Society, who are tormented by a vengeful ghost. Munch free popcorn and sip your fountain drink instead of biting your nails! All Points Transit can provide a ride to-and-from if you contact them in advance at 970.874.7334.

Delta Health Hospital needs your help

Speaking at the Coffee Klatch in December, Jean Ceriani, president of the Hospital Board of Directors, mentioned that the hospital lost most of its volunteers during the "Covid times", and has a great need for community volunteers to assist patients receiving treatment. No medical experience is necessary, just good people skills and a desire to help others, with travel expenses reimbursed @ \$.50/mile. Contact Darnell Place-Wise at Delta Health (970.399.2610) if you are interested. <https://deltahealthco.org/volunteers/>

Senior Skills and Talents round up

Having lived a long and productive life, many of us have acquired skills and talents we could share with our community. Sewing, woodworking, canning, arts and crafts, music... Whatever your talent or skill, consider offering to lead or co-lead a class for your neighbors. Contact Laura Lee at nfseniorconnections@gmail.com if you are interested.

January Birthdays

Happy Birthday to:



1/2 Christine Palafox	1/5 Dave Knutson
1/9 John Valentine	1/17 Sherrion Taylor
1/21 Elena Goldstein	1/22 Bobbie Selk
1/24 Jodi DeGrandchamp	1/27 Laura Lee Yates
1/29 Marian Marchun	

Calendar

What's Happening in the North Fork Valley in December

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) Exercise and fall prevention classes presented by the North Fork EMS: Paonia Senior Center – Tues & Fri at 10-11am Hotchkiss Memorial Hall – Mon & Thur, 9:30 am Crawford Town Hall (Advanced) Tues & Thurs 5:30-6:30 pm **Book Club for Seniors** – Monday, January 15, at 1:30 @ Paonia Senior Center. We'll discuss books about "Animals," fiction or nonfiction. **Write Your Life-** Memoir for Seniors at Paonia Senior Center on Wednesdays at 1:30. For more info/to join please call the facilitator, Yuri Chicovsky, at 970-314-0303.

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

Hotchkiss Senior Center now serves hot meals

Visit the Hotchkiss-Crawford Historical Museum in a

special tour led by docent Marjorie True on Monday, January 23, at 1:30.



cooked on the premises Tues and Thurs at noon! 872.3494

Caregivers' Support Group Thursdays, 1 – 3 pm via Zoom. Contact Gayla Michaud for information at 970.825.6288 or email GAMich76@outlook.com

Thursday Lunches at Paonia Senior Center, with locally-sourced catered meals at noon for \$4. Limited to first 20 to register by calling 970/527-3435 or by emailing scmSPAonia@gmail.com. Fresh and locally-sourced, \$4 donation. 1/5- Chick-A-Pea; 1/12-Blended Table; 1/19-Root & Vine; 1/26 Chrys Bailey; 2/2 Kathy Swartz.

Coffee Klatches at the Senior Center, Mondays at 9:30. Guest speakers include Debbie Kimball from Hope West on 1/9; Amy DeLuca from Creative Coalition on 1/16; Marjorie True from Hotchkiss-Crawford Historic Society on 1/23; and Sarah Smith from Paonia Library on 1/30; All Points Transit on 2/6.

Armchair Travel to Machu Picchu with Bob McHugh on Thursday, January 19, at 1:00. Paonia Senior Center.



January 2023



NEWS

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Both Senior Connections and the Paonia Senior Center appreciate their support!

Program Planning for 2023

We'd love to hear from you about what kinds of programming you would like us to provide in the coming year. We are actively working on plans to expand our engagement with seniors in Crawford and Hotchkiss and would love to hear your ideas about programs, classes, groups, etc that you think would be appropriate for your community. Please share your ideas with staff and board members.

Happy New Year: Thoughts on Aging

from Bonnie Eisenberg, Board Vice-Chair
The beginning of the new year is a traditional time to reflect on our lives and perhaps do a little assessment. I turned 75 recently, and I realized that reaching that milestone has changed my way of thinking about myself and aging. While staying healthy and active is still my goal, I have

decided to accept the reality of my age and cut myself some slack.

- I accept that I really do need hearing aids, and I am going to get them very soon so I don't continue to miss half of what is going on around me.
- I admit that I really need to hire someone for periodic major housecleaning.
- I accept that I will need to find a garden helper next season; I just can't manage all that work anymore.
- I now allow myself to sleep late on snowy winter days.

I am so happy to be involved with Senior Connections because it had shown me that I have a community support network, I don't have to do it all myself; it is okay to ask for help--because help is available. Wishing you all a Very Happy and Healthy New Year!