

*Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place*

## “I Do It Myself”: Accepting Help As We Age

When one of the members of North Fork Senior Connections was three years old, she remembers sitting down on the floor and insisting she would tie her own shoelaces. Since her child didn't know how to accomplish the task Mom offered to help, but the little girl insisted: “I do it myself!”

Most of us are determined to remain independent, regardless of age. Determination—along with genetics, healthy living, and pure luck—may have gotten us this far, but aging has a way of testing us in unexpected ways. One of the challenges of the process comes when we first discover we need help doing things we always aced before. But just because you're no longer supposed to climb ladders doesn't mean you're helpless—maybe you've just gained enough wisdom to ask for assistance. (Synonyms for ‘determination’ include ‘pigheadedness’ and ‘inflexibility....’)

At North Fork Senior Connections, we want to keep older adults thriving and in their own homes as long as possible. Many of our volunteers are elders, too, willing to lend a hand to help with the little things that can make a big difference. We've all been there—or will get there soon enough if Fate allows. During a recent free soup luncheon at the Paonia Senior Center for forty seniors, someone reminisced that she used to bring “old people” over for the low-cost meals. Now she'd passed the eighty-year-old mark herself—how had this happened?

With the advent of our new Director, Medina Ryan, our nonprofit is dramatically expanding our reach to the rest of the North Fork Valley. In the upcoming months, we'll be rolling out

more programs in Hotchkiss and Crawford. Together we can build a network of volunteer assistance that can improve the lives of older adults, especially those without family. Even if you can still do it yourself, you don't have to do it alone. Assistance isn't charity when it's neighbors helping one another.

## Everyone should have enough to eat.

Yet approximately 5.2 million older Americans faced food insecurity in 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic made things worse—even in our Valley. North Fork Senior Connections is determined to help alleviate this problem through several initiatives—and you can be part of a neighbor-to-neighbor solution.

- This year our mini-CSA program through Lynn Gillespie and the Living Farm has been expanded 50%, providing 30 weeks of fresh produce to 30 seniors, from April 28 to November 17. If you'd like to sponsor nutritious food for a senior in need: \$120 covers 10 weeks, \$360 the entire 30-week season. Make your donation payable to North Fork Senior Connections. (Cash is welcome, of course, and credit card payments can be arranged.)

- We're also looking for volunteer drivers to deliver CSAs on Fridays starting at 2:00.

- If you'd like to provide nutrition for older adults, we'll be accepting donations of food every Tuesday morning at 11:30 at the Paonia Senior Center for distribution.

- Please contact us if you'd like to volunteer for food distributions within your community.

Special thanks to the wonderful folks at

- Mountain Oven, who donate their weekly surplus for redistribution to seniors in need, and

- UpRoot, who harvest surplus produce from local farms.

ONE MORE WAY TO HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FOOD INSECURITY:

North Fork Senior Connections is seeking the donation of a working FREEZER (either chest or upright.) If you have an unneeded quality appliance please contact us.

### 2023 Spring Schedule for Gardening in the North Fork Valley!

- Thursdays 1:30 **3/2** Composting- Basics + Giveaways: new worm factory+worms, new back yard compost tumber
- 3/9** Pruning- How to prune grapes, fruit trees, roses, and others.
- 3/16** Field trip: Pruning Workshop 1:00 at Rogers Mesa Research Center in Hotchkiss—Recommended! If you want to carpool, be at Paonia Senior Center by 12:30 *sharp*.
- 3/23** Containers- Basics + raised bed options.
- 3/30** Soils- Basics + field trip to a class participant’s house to dig a new bed, showing methods and options for mixing in compost.
- 4/6** Watering- Basics + water savings.
- 4/13** Tomatoes- Indeterminate vs determinate, growing, transplanting, pruning
- 4/20** Pests- local pests, treatment, prevention
- 4/27** Field Trips to local gardens to look and ask questions. Classes at Paonia Senior Center.

### “A Touch of the Irish” Celebrate St Patrick’s

Day early at the Paradise Theater on Thursday, March 9th with “Finian’s Rainbow.” When an elderly Irishman emigrates to the American South with his daughter, he buries a pot of stolen gold near Fort Knox, expecting it to “grow.” A leprechaun follows, a bigoted U.S. senator interferes, and the daughter is suspected of witchcraft. This 1968 musical stars Fred Astaire, Petula Clark, and Tommy Steele. Because the free film runs 145 minutes, the start time will be 9:30 (so those who sign up in advance can get to lunch at the Senior Center by noon.) All Points Transit can provide a ride if you call them—also in advance—at 970.874.7334.



Last June we screened “**Crossing the Generational Divide: Teens Interviewing Longtime Local Elders**” on the big screen at the Paradise Theater. Now you can enjoy the film and the full individual interviews on our website. Here’s the link: <https://nfseniorconnections.org/north-fork-interviews/> Much gratitude to all the participants!

### Visit the Hotchkiss-Crawford Museum



Join North Fork Senior Connections for a special docent-led tour of the Hotchkiss-Crawford Historical Museum on Monday, March 27th @ 1:30. Led by Marjorie True. Tour is free but donations are welcomed. 1:30 tour follows Marjorie’s 9:30 Coffee Klatch presentation at Paonia Senior Center. Attend one or both!



Thanks to our generous sponsors:



Thanks to our generous coffee sponsor: Both Senior Connections and the Paonia Senior Center appreciate their support!



## February Birthdays

### Happy Birthday to:

John Zachman 3/2  
Laura Major 3/26

Julie Sapena 3/12  
Jill Knutson 3/31

Ron Hanna 3/22

## SAVE THE DATES!

- April 29th: Health & Wellness Fair sponsored by North Fork EMS and North Fork Senior Connections. Great classes and resources for seniors.
- Friday, May 5th, and Saturday, May 6th: spring's Service Saturday—details to follow next month

## Calendar

### What's Happening in the North Fork Valley in March

**Gardening in the North Fork Valley** Thursdays 1:30-2:30 (See schedule p.2)

**Managing Your Digital Images** Fridays 2-3, Cataloging photos Fri 3/3; correcting photos 3/10; wrap-up 3/17.

**Let's Snowshoe!** 3/8 (See article page 2)

**Tour the Hotchkiss-Crawford Museum** 3/27 (see article)

**Potluck Luncheon** March 14 followed by Armchair Travel to Greenland and the Canadian High Arctic

**Craft Garden Flags** with Lynn Mattingly on March 20 @ 1:30 (see article)

**Stay Active and Independent for Life** Exercise and fall prevention classes presented by the North Fork EMS: Paonia Senior Center-Tues & Fri 10-11am; Hotchkiss Memorial Hall - Mon & Thurs; 9:30 am; Crawford Town Hall-Wed 10am and Tues & Thurs (Advanced) 5:30-6:30 pm

**Book Club for Seniors** - Tuesday, March 21, we'll discuss books by "Local Authors," fiction or nonfiction. Paonia Senior Center at 1:30. Special guest BonnaSue Draper.

**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.

**Mending Hearts** offers support to those dealing with life after loss. Hotchkiss Town Hall, Tues. Feb 28-March 28 from 1-2:30. RSVP required. For questions or to RSVP for programs, contact Claire at 874-1628 or [CDaewe@HopeWestCO.org](mailto:CDaewe@HopeWestCO.org). Mending Hearts begins in Crawford 3/10 at 2pm.

**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 full meals cooked on the premises Tues and Thurs and a soup lunch on Wed, all 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](mailto: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](mailto:scmspaonia@gmail.com). Fresh and locally-sourced, \$4 donation. 3/2- Chrys Bailey(\$5); 3/9-Simple Cafe; 3/16-Kathy Swartz; 3/23 Chick-A-Pea; 3/30 TBD.

**Coffee Klatches** at the Senior Center, Mondays at 9:30. Guest speakers include Police Chief Laiminger on Frauds and Scams on 3/6; Natasha Leger from CHC on 3/13; Sarah Smith and Ladonna Gunn from Delta Libraries on 3/20; and Marjorie True from Hotchkiss-Crawford Museum on 3/27

### NEW in Crawford at Town Hall:

3/10 Healthy Aging with Barbara Hathaway at noon. Self-care for older adults;  
3/15 Coffee, Cards and Cribbage 11:30-12:30; 3/29 Coffee, Cards and Cribbage 11:30-12:30; 3/31 HopeWest program "When to Make the Call" @1:30. Free informative session on end-of-life decisions for all adults, incl. those confronting terminal illness, caregivers & loved ones. Contact NFSC for more info.



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February  
2023

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## Craft Garden Flags with Lynn Mattingly

On Monday, March 20, at 1:30, join us at the Paonia Senior Center when we'll stamp fabric to make decorative flags to display in your garden (or wherever you like.) Lynn will supply all the materials, though donations are always welcome. No previous skill needed.



## Let's Snowshoe!

### New date Wednesday, March 8

(Postponed from February) Whether you're a total beginner or an "old hand," it's time to take advantage of winter in the North Fork Valley. Our Director Medeina Ryan is experienced at teaching and leading snowshoe excursions. We plan to travel to Crawford (snow-dependent, of course) by carpool—let us know if you require a ride. If you need gear, we will borrow snowshoes and poles from the Cedaredge Library through their partnership with the Nature Connection. **RSVPs by the end of the day Monday, 3/6, are important for this event** so we can obtain the needed snowshoes and contact you if weather requires a time or location change/give out the precise location of the trip. Call 970.527.3482 or email [nfseniorconnections@gmail.com](mailto:nfseniorconnections@gmail.com). **We'll meet at the Paonia Senior Center at 10:30 to carpool/meet at Crawford Town Hall at 11:00, depending on where you live.** Bring a lunch, at least a liter of water, sunscreen, hat, gloves, sunglasses.



## Tour Greenland & the Canadian High Arctic!

When Ben Graves voyaged north with National Geographic as a Grosvenor Teacher Fellow, he encountered polar bears, narwhals, and walrus while experiencing the changing landscape of the Arctic. Currently the director of the Nature Connection, Ben will share pictures and observations from his trip at the Paonia Senior Center on Tuesday, March 14th at 1:00 following a potluck lunch—please join us!