

Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place

Crossing the Generational Divide

by Laura Lee Yates for North Fork Senior Connections
Half-a-century can make a big difference. When you pair local high-school students with long-time community elders, their dialogues can reveal a few tears, a lot of laughter, and major changes in the North Fork Valley and the world-at-large. One example: a sixty-seven-year-old reported dropping out in his senior year and later finishing his GED, which prompted his young interviewer to ask, "Oh, did you do that online?" (The Internet didn't begin until 1983.)

Through a grant from NextFifty Initiative, Western Colorado Community Foundation/Dave and Mary Wood Fund, and Western Colorado Community Foundation/West Elk



Community Fund, North Fork Senior Connections recently arranged sixteen conversations between individual students and community elders. Videographer David Jacobson filmed the exchanges and will be editing segments of each interview into a compilation that will air on the big screen at the Paradise Theater in a special free presentation Friday, June 3, from 7-8:30. Elders will reunite onstage with their student interviewers to discuss how it felt to interact.

"It was great to see the participants opening up," Jacobson said, "becoming very personal and not holding back."

Nearly all the "interviewers" attend the Paonia Experiential Leadership Academy, referred to as PELA, led by Dr. Emily Wassell.

"Our school is designed around the science of wellbeing," she explains "and social and civic en-

gagement and service is a critical component of wellbeing. Allowing students to work in our community strengthens bonds to this special place for the students, and helps our numerous community groups." It also "helps students build confidence, their skills, and lets them be an active and integral part of the community."

Talented filmmaker/musician/memoirist Yuri Chivovsky mentored the students regarding the interview process, working in concert with PELA instructor and author Barbe Chambliss, who teaches Conscious Peacemaking. Each of her participating students will receive school credit and a certificate for reaching across the generational divide in an act of peace-making.

"It was so good to be around brilliant young minds with good intentions and good energy," enthused hospice nurse Margit Yates, one of the community elders. "I think I could use some younger friends!" Another intersection of young and old will occur on May 14, when folks of all ages join together to spend a morning doing seasonal tasks for senior residents in the North Fork Valley. Known as **Service Saturday**, this semi-annual effort organized by North Fork Senior Connections helps local elders remain in their homes as long as possible by completing chores like preparing flowerbeds for planting, washing windows, retrieving outdoor furniture from winter storage and installing swamp coolers. If you or a senior you know could use this help, please contact North Fork Senior Connections at 970.527.3482 or nfseniorconnections@gmail.com. And if you'd like to volunteer, we'd love to have you!

Thursday Lunches Return! Paonia Senior Center will offer first 20 signups a simple healthy catered meal of locally-sourced ingredients for \$4 beginning May 12th at noon. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED by calling 527-3435 or emailing scmspaonia@gmail.com.

Cinco de Mayo on the Old Spanish Trail- Step back in time on Thursday May 5 @ 11:00AM. A historian guides us around Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center in Delta, replicating the 1820s-era fur-trading center. Limit 20. Must RSVP. \$4 per senior. Carpools from Senior Center at 10:00.



May 2022 NEWS

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May Birthdays



Happy Birthday to:

Jim Turner & Michel Edson	5/6
Jeanette Gerry	5/9
Lindi Mereness	5/15
Rita Murphy	5/31
Paul Schirmer	5/11
John Archer	5/20

Service Saturday is MAY 14th! Seniors who need seasonal help with outdoor tasks like readying beds for planting, washing windows, retrieving outdoor furniture from winter storage and installing swamp coolers call 970.527.3482 ASAP. VOLUNTEERS of any age please join us at Paonia Town Park at 8:30AM—we'll divide into teams, complete the chores, and meet back at the park at noon for pizza—it's fun and rewarding!

Calendar

What's Happening in the North Fork Valley in March

Garden Talks at 10:00 on Thursdays See NFSC website for the schedule and topics.

"Boost Your Brain & Memory," Award-winning class to help us stay sharp as we age led by Randy Campbell & Linda McCone. Program began 4/19, but you can still join in. Tuesdays at 2pm @ Paonia Senior Center

Walks In MAY, weather permitting, meet at 10:15 each Wednesday @ Paonia River Park gazebo EXCEPT the FIRST Wednesday, May 4: meet at the Senior Center 10:10 or @ Coal Train in Hotchkiss 10:30 to caravan seven miles to scenic road above Eagle Rock.

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, 9:30am Crawford Town Hall (Advanced) Tues & Thurs 5:30-6:30 pm

Book Club for Seniors – Monday 5/16 @ 1:30 pm Paonia Senior Center. This month's topic is "MOTHERS," fiction or nonfiction.

Write Your Life– Memoir for Seniors every Wednesday at 1:30, facilitated by Yuri Chicovsky.

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 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