

Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place

## Help on the Way

by Laura Lee Yates for North Fork Senior Connections

Perhaps you've heard me rattle off the words, "Don't hesitate to ask for assistance—remember, it's just neighbors helping neighbors," and thought, "Easy for her to say!" But during the Great March Windstorm, I learned the truth: Asking for help is harder than I'd imagined.

Working part-time for North Fork Senior Connections, I field phone calls and emails from elders across the Valley who are seeking a bit of assistance, whether it's with transportation to appointments through our Neighborly Rides program, becoming more engaged in the community through activities, obtaining fresh fruit and vegetables through our CSA program and collaboration with UpRoot—or preparing their yard for the change in seasons. Just as our nonprofit began gearing up for our upcoming spring Service Saturday endeavor, where teams of volunteers help North Fork Valley elders get ready for summer, I was forced to seek aid—for me.

After caring for my sweetheart through the end of his 15-year battle with cancer, my dog and I moved back into our cottage on the east side of Paonia. The evening's forecast called for wind gusts over 50 mph, so I guess we shouldn't have been so startled by the great CRACK! outside the window. On a previous Sick Tree Day, experts had warned that the scraggly sub-alpine fir beside my cottage didn't look healthy; now the top twenty feet of it bisected my front yard, branches on the

ground not far from the roof corner. Soon after the rush of gratitude that it hadn't damaged my home, my heart sank: an arborist just wasn't in my budget.

Then I remembered a wonderful Hotchkiss volunteer with a chainsaw.

Making that phone call was truly difficult (even though I know men love their power tools) but I had to swallow foolish pride and punch in his number. That night I slept better knowing help was on the way. In the morning Chainsaw Man and his wife appeared with a truck and soon another generous volunteer from my neighborhood (who with *his* wife just expertly painted our office at the Paonia Senior Center) joined us, hauling branches out to the street. The trunk, cut into rounds, required another truck trip; what's left standing of the tree props up a honeysuckle bush. All that remained in the front yard was a line of sawdust and a few fir needles.

According to Pope Paul VI, "Nothing makes one feel so strong as a call for help." We all want to remain independent regardless of age, but sometimes we need the assistance of others. So if you're an elder with a yard that requires more attention than you can give at this time in your life, why not empower the volunteers at North Fork Senior Connections to spend 60-90 minutes at your place this spring? They can clean your gutters, get your flower beds ready for planting, install your swamp cooler—even wash the outside of your ground-floor windows. **Service Saturday in Paonia will be April 27; in Hotchkiss and Crawford we're scheduled for May 4. Call or email us ASAP** and a "scout" will visit to assess your needs. We want to help!

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

One morning of your effort can change a whole season for a local elder. If you want to be on the giving end of Spring Service Saturday 2024—on April 27 in Paonia or Hotchkiss/Crawford on May 4—please call Faye at 970.209.9721.

### A Musical for Spring!

Judy Garland and Fred Astaire star in the 1948 Technicolor film “Easter Parade.” Bursting with song and dance numbers, the film originally featured Gene Kelly, who broke his ankle, bringing Astaire out of retirement. Free to seniors with a complimentary popcorn and fountain drink, the Paradise Theater airs the movie on Thursday, April 11, at 10AM. If you need a ride, plan ahead and call our Neighborly Rides program at 970.527.1535 or All Points Transit at 970.874.7334.



### NeuroMovement/Feldenkrais Classes in April

RN/LMT Jessie Hastings of Move To Improve will teach a series of free weekly classes beginning April 3rd from 9-10AM in the Paonia Library Community Room, continuing every Wednesday through April. The first Wednesday of every month will be done seated to allow those who can't get down on the floor to participate. This very slow mindful movement increases strength, flexibility and energy, relaxes the nervous system, enhances mental clarity, concentration, and awareness and slows down the effects of aging. Your brain can create new pathways around limitations! Bring a yoga mat and Mexican/yoga blanket if possible.

### Coming Soon—CSA 2024

If you're a North Fork elder who'd benefit from fresh vegetables delivered free to your door weekly from May to November, please call Laura Lee at 970.527.3482 and we'll talk!

Thanks to our generous sponsors:



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



## April Birthdays

### Happy Birthday to:

Debbie Kimball 4/5  
Bruce Woodside 4/10  
Lynn Mattingly 4/21  
Kathy Thompson 4/28

Marion Stewart 4/5  
Joany Hunt 4/16  
Marilyn Wyatt 4/27

## April Calendar

### What's Happening at the Senior Center in April

**Join the Song Circle** just for the love of making folk music with others. No skill or talent required, lyrics provided. Facilitated by pro singer/songwriter/guitarist Ellen Stapenhorst. Every first Tuesday of the month at 2:00 at Paonia Senior Center. Join us April 3rd.

**Path of Least Resistance Gardening** series with Master Gardener John Valentine on Mondays at 1:00, Paonia Senior Center: 4/1 Pests, Diseases, Management; 4/8 Garden Myths + Early Planting

**Here & Now MEDITATION**-Meg O'Shaughnessy facilitates this ongoing group at Paonia Senior Center Thursday mornings at 9:00-10:00. All are welcome.

**The Book Club** at the Paonia Senior Center is going strong! We gather at 2:00 on the third Tuesday of the month of the Paonia Senior Center. April 16: "True West" by Betsy Quammen, nonfiction; May 21: World War II (fiction or nonfiction) in honor of Memorial Day; June 18: Jodi Picoult (author of fiction-- "Small Great Things" is a thought-provoking read.) Please call for more info.

**Silver Threads Sewing Club**, 2nd & 4th Tuesdays @ Paonia Senior Center at 1:00. April 23rd: Pro quilter Lynn Mattingly teaches "Making a Quilted Cellphone Case." Group facilitated by experienced quilter Connie Hodges & friends. Questions? 970.527.3482 or Connie @ 970.216.4457.

**Paonia River Park Walks** every Wednesday at new time: **10:30**. Meet at the gazebo.

**Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL)** Exercise and fall prevention classes presented by the North Fork EMS: Paonia Senior Center Tues & Fri 8:45-9:45 or 10-11; Hotchkiss Memorial Hall – Mon & Thurs @9:30; Crawford Town Hall 10-11 Wednesdays plus Advanced classes Tues & Thurs 5:30-6:30 pm.

**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**- Paonia Senior Center 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** serves hot full meals cooked on the premises Tues, Wed and Thurs, all at noon. No reservation required, to-go orders available. 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

**Learn Tai Chi**: The Paonia Senior Center host instructors Resa and Tom Wells on Wednesdays evening from 5:30-7 beginning April 3. Call Linda at 970.527.3435 for cost and more information.

**Coffee Klatch** @Paonia Senior Center 9:30 AM: 4/15 Marla True-Carlson OT, Taking Care of Your Joints; 4/22, Chair Pilates for All Bodies with Lakshmi Van Atta Gishler; 4/29 It's All About the Nerves, also with Lakshmi

**Catered lunches @ Paonia Senior Center**: No lunch 4/4; Rio Bravo 4/11: 476 Eatery (Thai) 4/18; Sweetgrass 4/25. Sign up starts Friday before next lunch by calling 527.3435.



April  
2024

## Board of Directors

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Laura Lee Yates,  
Program Manager

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## Celebrating our new Volunteer Coordinator

We are excited to welcome Faye Sullivan to our staff—now there are two of us! Half-Scottish Faye grew up in northeastern England, where she graduated from university in her native country before taking a job in Grand Junction. Fortunately Faye visited Paonia and fell in love—with both the community and homegrown local Chaiah Sullivan. The two married and are now raising their five-year-old son Finnley. In 2012 Faye received her MBA from Colorado Mesa University. She is also the Event Manager/Staff Coordinator for The Forage Sisters, a high-end catering business featuring locally-sourced organic foods that delight the attendees of events and weddings from the desert outside Moab to a campsite in the Maroon Bells and everywhere in between. Already serving as the secretary of the NFSC Board of Directors, we're thrilled that Faye has taken on ten hours weekly as coordinator of our wonderful volunteers—expect to see more younger faces side-by-side with the seasoned veterans!

You make Senior Connections work—your time, your effort, your generous contributions.

**DONATE TODAY!**

NFSC website [www.nfseniorconnections.org](http://www.nfseniorconnections.org)