



Finding Solutions to Help Seniors Age in Place

Feeding the North Fork, One Meal at a Time

by Laura Lee Yates for North Fork Senior Connections

A quarter-century ago, a North Fork holiday tradition began. Larry Jakubiak, former Hotchkiss mayor and town trustee, credits two local families who decided to cook Thanksgiving dinner for seniors. Jakubiak, then owner of the North Fork Valley Restaurant, only ordered the food—at first. Mary-Ruth Dunham took over and the dinners expanded, until one Thanksgiving morning at 8AM when Jakubiak discovered six frozen turkeys and no Mary-Ruth. “She’d fallen ill,” he explains, “so I started thawing the birds in the restaurant sinks and got on the phone.”

The restaurant’s customers stepped up, and soon someone supplied all the drinks, the Elks got to work setting up, one lady brought green beans—and the rest really is history. “People really wanted to keep it going,” Jakubiak says. “We moved the dinner to the Hotchkiss Senior Center, and to this day I cook all the hot food and folks bring side dishes.” Still a dynamic volunteer at age 75, Jakubiak proves what a difference one person can make. But he’s quick to point out how local businesses and organizations help it happen. “Taco Hut supplies the paper goods, Zack’s smokes the turkeys, and there are lots of great volunteers. Christmas is basically the same meal but then we also serve smoked ham.”

The dinner isn’t just for Hotchkiss seniors anymore: they’re North Fork Holiday Dinners. Folks of all ages drive in from Paonia and Crawford. During the pandemic Larry and the volunteers set up a to-go line, with everybody six feet apart for safety. Covid is still with us, but vaccines and medical advances have made it possible to gather once again. This year’s free Thanksgiving dinner on November 28 starts at 11AM and serves “until at least 1:30,” Larry assured me.

If you’d like to give Larry Jakubiak a helping hand and be part of the magic, call him at 970.260.9628 or email lwj241@hotmail.com. Sue Garlick, the new pastor of the Paonia Methodist Church, reports that they will serve a Friendsgiving Dinner at noon on the 28th; please call to let her know you’re coming/bringing a dish/volunteering. Wheel-

chair access through the sanctuary. 970.739.1049. In Crawford, Saddle Mountain Church will celebrate the harvest on November 17th starting noonish. If you plan to attend please call (970) 921-5673.

But meals aren’t just for holidays. Food’s required each and every day, and it can get old cooking all your own meals, especially when you’re aging and on your own. For more than two years the Hotchkiss Senior Center has provided full sit-down, cooked-on-the-premises lunches for \$4 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. “We feel really good about this program,” says co-president Billie Marta. “We usually serve at least fifty seniors and there’s always lots of conversation. Folks come from Paonia and Crawford, too. Wednesday’s are quieter, but it’s not just soup anymore—today was a Spaghetti Bake. And on Thursdays folks can come early and enjoy music from 11-12 by local players in the string band.” Sharing Ministries of Montrose provides food for the meals and often there’s extra that seniors can take home. A generous local rancher provides beef whenever it’s needed.

On Thursdays North Fork Senior Connections collaborates with the Paonia Senior Center, spearheaded by new president Linda McCone, to serve delicious lunches from local restaurants and caterers. Diners pay \$5 or \$6 depending on the meal, while the rest is covered by a grant and generous donations from locals who believe in the program. “We love getting folks together to enjoy a tasty and nutritious meal,” McCone explains. To make a reservation call 970.527.3435 any time after midnight on Friday for the following Thursday—these lunches are popular.

When your energy gets limited, it can feel like “real food” is just too much trouble for just one person—it’s easier to eat cereal or open a can of chicken noodle.... But what if that bowl of soup was delivered to your door, nutrient-rich and sourced from our local bounty of vegies and pasture-raised meat? If you’re a senior in need, call our amazing Volunteer Manager and “scrappy-cook” extraordinaire Faye Sullivan (*What would you do if someone gave you 100 pounds of potatoes?*) at our volunteer number: 970.527.1735. Donations of support are always appreciated!





NFSC wants to take this opportunity to acknowledge a few of the generous individuals who help this organization accomplish our mission:

- Our Board of Directors, who give their time, energy & expertise
- Greg Peterson, who donates the storage unit that corrals our tools
- Rylee Lopez, who made the Flower Delivery program a reality

- Chris, Dana, and the great crew at Mountain Oven
- Jacob Bower, who supplies NFSC & the Paonia Senior Center with Rubicon coffee
- The staff and gleaners of UpRoot & Colorado Farm & Food Alliance who bring us wonderful local organic produce
- The amazing JOHN VALENTINE, who not only formats our monthly newsletter but also taught the fabulous gardening series and supplied six raised beds to seniors!
- All of the generous folks who donate to support our mission
- And each of our wonderful volunteers—too many to name here: You make it all happen!

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for our annual Kids Pasta Project Dinner—one of our favorite fundraisers—on Monday, November 18, held at The Creamery in Hotchkiss. Great food, adorable kids, and support for a won-

derful cause! \$25 for adults. To make your reservations please call 970.250.6836 or email kppreservations@gmail.com

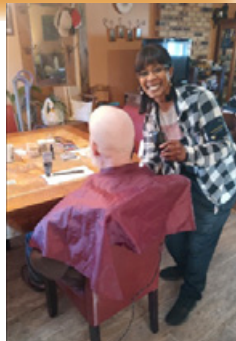


SPRUCE UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

Tonya Marie from New Beginnings Nails wants to pamper seniors for the Holidays! Friday afternoon, December 6, @ Paonia Senior Center, you can enjoy:

Women's haircut \$30, Men's \$25; Shave \$10; Beard trim \$5.

Deadline to sign up is November 27. Call 527.3482 for more info.



Colorado Gives!

Many thanks to everyone who responded to our plea for financial support last month. We were heartened to know that you appreciate our efforts to support the senior community and are willing to pitch in when needed.

Senior Connections will again participate in Colorado Gives day on December 10, 2024. This is a way for people and businesses to learn about nonprofits working on issues and serving communities you care about most. If you are moved to continue support for North Fork Senior Connections, we hope you will consider making a donation during the upcoming Colorado Gives campaign, beginning on November 1, 2024. Check out the webpage at ColoradoGives.org and search for us under the "Human Services" category.

As always, you can make a donation to NFSC on our webpage nfseniorconnections.org or by sending a check to PO Box 1738, Paonia 81428. Join us in building a caring, supportive community for all seniors in the North Fork Valley.

Auntie Mame: Free Spirit & Living Legend

Hark back to the early 1900s with the lively comedy starring Rosalind Russell as the irrepressible "Auntie Mame." Screened in 1958, the film takes off with nephew Patrick Dennis being placed in the care of his flamboyant relation in Manhattan. The stock market crash in 1929 changes everything.

Paradise Theater will screen this classic as part of their free Senior Movie series honoring the late Philip Salembier on November 14 at 10AM, with a complimentary fountain drink and popcorn.

November Birthdays



Happy Birthday to:

Sarah Bishop 11/2

Katie Gnauck 11/6

Lyn Howe 11/9

Bonnie Eisenberg 11/21

Tess Backhus 11/5

Steve Smith 11/8

Judy Lafferty 11/9

Bernie Canape 11/23

Kathy Baes 11/5

November Calendar

What's Happening at the Senior Center in November

NEW DATE: Join the Song Circle just for the joy of singing with others. No skill or talent required, lyrics provided. Facilitated by singer/songwriter Ellen Stapenhorst. **SECOND** Tuesday at 2:00, November 12, at Paonia Senior Center.

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 will gather at 2:00 on the **FOURTH** Tuesday of the month of the Paonia Senior Center. November 26. We'll discuss the novel *Go As a River* by Shelley Read.

Paonia River Park Walks switch to 11:00 in November! We meet at the gazebo (parking lot) at 10:30AM. Great trail, fall color, 1 mile long—join us!

Neuromovement (Feldenkrais) with Jessi Hastings, RN, LMT, Certified Anat Baniel Method, will resume Wednesdays @ Paonia Library Community Room, 9AM sharp. **NO CLASS** 11/27.

Write Your Life- Memoir for Seniors at Paonia Senior Center on Wednesdays at 1:30. Please call for more info/to join.

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.

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 Mondays and Wednesdays plus Advanced classes Tues & Thurs 5:30-6:30 pm.

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

Coffee Klatch @Paonia Senior Center 9:30 AM November 11—Pilates, Laurene Bissell; November 18—Healthy Eating for the Holidays with nutrition therapist Madeline Kent

Catered lunches @ Paonia Senior Center Thursdays @ Noon. Flying Fork 10/7; Chrys Bailey 10/14; Clemmie Bouton 10/21; No Lunch on Thanksgiving 11/28. Sign up starts Friday before next Thursday's lunch by calling 527.3435, emailing scmspaonia@gmail.com, or signing up in person at the Senior Center, noting date & time. \$5-6 per person

North Fork Senior Connections

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P.O. Box 1738 Paonia, CO 81428



November
2024

Board of Directors

- Bruce Woodside, Chair
- Bonnie Eisenberg, Vice Chair
- Brad Thacker, Treasurer
- Faye Sullivan, Secretary/Volunteer Manager
- Marsha Brezonick, Member
- Wanda Gofforth, Crawford Member
- Laura Lee Yates, Program Manager

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Communing at the Well of Grief

Friday November 1, 2024

2:30 - 4 pm

Paonia Senior Center 106 3rd Street Paonia



Honoring our sorrow
 Witnessing one another's heart
 Lending each other the courage to go deep
 Leaning in, Listening in the stillness
 Harvesting gifts ~ insight, forgiveness, a new way of seeing

With Meg O'Shaughnessy
 Meg has served as hospice volunteer since 2011
 and leads a meditation group in Paonia

HAVE A HEART?



The wonderful folks from the North Fork EMS Community Paramedicine team will present the information you need to keep it healthy on Thursday, November 7, at 1:30. Join us at the Paonia Senior Center (after the catered lunch from Flying Fork for those with reservations!)

NFSC volunteers provide free transportation for seniors within Delta County. Plan ahead and call

NEIGHBORLY RIDES!

Do you need help with a small household task? Call **HANDY HELPERS** for volunteer assistance.

(970) 527-1735