



Why Volunteer?

Volunteering offers meaningful opportunities to connect with others, build skills, and strengthen the community. Whether contributing time occasionally or on a regular basis, volunteering benefits both those receiving help and those giving it.

Key benefits of volunteering:

- Provides Purpose – Helping others can bring new meaning, especially during life transitions.
- Builds Community – Encourages connection and deeper civic engagement.
- Creates Friendships – Offers opportunities to meet new people and strengthen relationships.
- Boosts Social Skills – Develops communication, teamwork, and active listening.
- Improves Confidence – Contributing to worthwhile efforts fosters pride and fulfillment.
- Teaches Skills – Provides hands-on experience and transferable abilities.
- Opens Opportunities – Expands networks and potential career pathways.
- Adds Enjoyment – Encourages exploration of interests while giving back.
- Supports Well-being – Helps reduce stress, improve mood, and lessen isolation.
- Encourages Growth – Builds resilience and problem-solving skills through new experiences.

Volunteers play a vital role in helping individuals remain independent and connected, while also contributing to a stronger, more vibrant community for all!

Thank you to our generous recent donors:

Brad Thacker, Anthony Reichenbach, Eileen Keavney, Kay Riggs, Diane King, Carol Littell, Susan & William Harding, Marty Rozman, and the Carl E Berg Education Foundation.

Thanks also to Jim & Loretta Small for our new vacuum. To Betsy Rapp for spearheading our educational series on osteoporosis, to Amanda Love, the Smalls, Diane King and all who have stepped up to help set up and clean up for our Thursday lunches. Thanks to Keith



Ellison (photo) for playing bass at our Volunteer Appreciation Party, and to the North Fork Community Choir for a pre-concert taste of



lovely classical music. Thank you to Bobbie Selk for your contribution to tuning our piano.

Jeremiah Weber of Merit Electric for donation of services to rewire the front door entrance of the Paonia Senior Center.

Please Take Note:

Appreciation Party

Volunteer Appreciation Party

About 45 people were welcomed in a festive atmosphere, with delicious food by Clemie Bouton, words and a certificate of appreciation, a card, the elegant sounds of bass player Keith Ellison, and a rose to take home. Laughs were had during a trivia contest focused on the Senior Center and Paonia.



A Call for Artists

Thank you to Rosemary Ranck, our first senior artist to show her work in the Paonia Senior Center. We will have a rotating show every other month.. If you would like to display your work in a solo show or with others, please reach out to us.



(Above) Nutrition for Bone Health with Maddie Kent;
(right) Jewish End of Life Rituals with Jean Berman

A Call for Piano Players

Our piano has been tuned by John Whooley, and is ready to be played! Come in between programs to try it out, offer to play during lunch, or we can create a program for you to play solo or with friends. Hooray for music!



Outdoor Furniture Wanted

Do you have nice outdoor furniture you're ready to pass on? We are in the process of creating an outdoor sitting area with sail cloth for shade.

Mah Jong, Anyone?

A new Paonia resident is looking for others to play Mah Jong with. Reach out to Jean to be connected.

VOLPS Senior Soup Program Update

Thanks to all who have helped make this possible so far! Last delivery dates are May 13 & 27. Please bring your jars back to the Paonia Senior Center after the final delivery or call Rylee for pickup, or for donation information: 303-638-6727.

From p.3: Special Programs

don Mason - Exercises for spinal alignment, bloodflow, and sense of whole body connection. Work with the range of motion you have, standing or seated. Brandon will be offering 4 sessions in Qigong on alternate Tuesdays, beginning May 26.

May 20 - **Wraparound Services for Youth and Families** (Crawford) 12:30 - Learn and hear stories from John VanDenBerg, a child psychologist, about a unique way of responding to children and families with mental health needs. John developed this approach, which is now used worldwide. John's family is from Crawford.

May 20 - **Move with Ease: Discover Feldenkrais** Feldenkrais Movement uses slow, gentle, pain-free motions to help the brain reorganize and create new patterns. Try this simple chair-based class and feel the benefits right away. Jessi Hastings, 9 am

May at a Glance

North Fork Senior Connections

Meals

Paonia VOA Lunch – Mon/Wed/Fri, Noon • 970-874-7661

Hotchkiss Senior center Meals – (\$4 donation) Tues/Wed/Thurs, Noon • 970-872-3494

Souper Tuesday with Anthony (Paonia) – (\$2-3 donation) May 5 Cinco de Mayo Vegetarian corn & black bean, May 19 Creamy green bean soup with bacon, shallot & potato

Crawford Lunches – 1st & 3rd Wed (\$6-10) May 6 Maher Onion Valley Ladies Club, May 20 Holy Smokin' BBQ, with John VanDenBerg presenting (see Special Programs), to reserve call Wanda at 970-216-6345 or wgoforth@gmail.com

Paonia Thurs Catered Lunches (\$6-10) – 970-527-3435 to reserve Fri-Tues noon

- May 7 AP Catering
- May 14 Flying Fork
- May 21 Chrys Bailey
- May 28 Berg Harvest

Programs & Learning (Paonia, except as noted)

Tues at 2:

- May 5 Breathe to Save Your Life with Derek Udy - (by donation, and see Special Programs)
 - May 12 Song Circle with Ellen Stapenhorst
 - May 19 Qigong for Health & Longevity with Brandon Mason (see Special Programs)
 - May 26 Book Club: Local Women Authors
- Shakespeare Group** Tues May 19, 6 pm: - As You Like It

Write Your Life (Memoirs) Wed 1:30 pm

Thursdays at 3:

- May 7 Benefits of Occupational Therapy

with Amy Smeetsler (see SP)

- May 14 Grief Meets Canvas with Ronna Webb (see SP)
- May 21 Bone Health Series with Jennifer Nunez (see SP)

Wellness & Exercise

Paonia Riverpark Walk Wed 9 am, now meeting on Wednesdays at 9 am at the gazebo in the Paonia River Park when it's a little cooler!

Meditation Thurs 9 am (Paonia)

Stay Active and Independent for Life "SAIL" Classes:

- Hotchkiss: Mon/Thurs 9:30
- Crawford: Mon 10 • Tues/Thurs 5:30 (Adv.)
- Paonia: Tues/Fri 8:45 & 10

Support & Meetings

Dementia Caregivers Group (Hotchkiss) 2nd & 4th Wed, 1:30

NFSC Board Meeting (Paonia) Tues May 12, 11:30

Special Programs

May is Osteoporosis Awareness & Prevention Month

May 5 - **Breathing Techniques which Enhance Bone Health** - Derek Udy

May 7 - **Benefits of Occupational Therapy** - Amy Smeetsler - A practical, easy-to-follow talk on staying safe and independent as you age, covering simple tips to prevent falls and keep your bones strong so you can keep doing the things that matter most to you.

May 21 - **The Hidden Connection: Stress, Sleep, Hormones & Bone Health** - Jennifer Nunez, RN, DON - Learn practical, accessible & empowering strategies to support bone health through lifestyle habits.

May 14 - **Grief Meets Canvas** -3-4:30 - Ronna Webb will gently guide artwork for free expression. Forget searching for words and let your loss speak to you in the language of energy.

May 19 - **Qigong for Health & Longevity** - 2 - Bran-

See page 2, col. 2

Board of Directors



May 2026

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Neighborly Rides

Free transportation for seniors, within Delta county, for medical appointments, grocery shopping and other errands. Call 970-527-1735, several days in advance, to schedule a ride, or to request a driver application.

This newsletter has been sponsored by NF Physical Therapy and Performance



New Occupational Therapist!

Now booking as early as May 1, 2026

Amy Smeester, OT
39 years experience

- Osteoporosis / bone strengthening
- Fall analysis and prevention
- Activity-based recovery
- Home independence
- Maintaining independence in activities of daily life
- Hand, wrist, and elbow rehabilitation

Accepting Self Pay, Medicare and Medicaid

Are you recovering from an injury, concerned about a loved one, or simply desiring to feel more confident in your daily routine? Amy can help you identify risks and build practical solutions - so you can keep living life on your own terms!

Come meet Amy and enjoy a presentation on the many benefits of Occupational Therapy on Thursday, May 7 @ 3pm at the Paonia Senior Center!

Book now before the schedule fills!

(970) 852-4488 OR office@paoniaperformance.com
223 Grand Ave. downtown Paonia

223 Grand Ave, Paonia 970-852-4488
office@paoniaperformance.com

Thank you for your support of NFSC!

Monthly Giving: A Little Each Month

A Big Difference All Year.

Your monthly gift helps keep programs, meals and community connections strong all year long. \$25/month provides year-round support for our programs and community

Scan to give securely online



<https://nfseniorconnections.org/donate/>