



CONNECTION

GARFIELD COUNTY OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS



Volume 16, Issue 11
November, 2026

IN MEMORY OF ONE OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

Mary Lee Miracle

We are deeply saddened by the passing of our dear community member Mary Lee Miracle, whose kindness and creativity touched so many lives.

Mary Lee was born in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, to John A. and Mary "Honey" Heuschkel. She graduated from high school in Silverton, Oregon



and went on to build a wonderfully varied and creative career. Over the years, she worked as an LPN, a daycare provider, a custom cake decorator, and ultimately flourished as the owner and operator of Draperies by Mary,

where her exceptional artistic sewing skills truly shined.

Mary loved butterflies, card

games, bingo, counted cross-stitch, jigsaw puzzles, and watching shapes in the clouds. She cherished time spent with family and friends — most recently at Rifle Senior Center, her church, and Grand River Care Center — where her gentle presence and warm smile were always a gift.

Mary's creativity, kindness, and quiet joy will be remembered with love by all of us.



BRIDGE EXERCISE

Activate your core and posterior chain (backside of your body) with a bridge. This is a great exercise to use as a warm-up

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor, and your arms extended by your sides.
2. Pushing through your feet and bracing your core, raise your bottom off the ground until your hips are fully extended, squeezing your glutes at the top.
3. Slowly return to the starting position and repeat.

LEFTOVER TURKEY SHEPHERD'S PIE

Recipe Adapted from City Market

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 stalk of celery, chopped
- 8 oz. white mushrooms, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups chicken (or turkey) stock
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 1/2 tsp. chicken bouillon
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 2 cups chopped leftover turkey meat (or rotisserie chicken)
- 1 cup frozen peas, (no need to thaw)
- 4 cups leftover mashed potatoes
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- Optional garnish: fresh parsley

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
2. Melt butter with olive oil in a large 12" cast iron skillet. Add the onions, carrots, celery, and mushrooms to the skillet and sauté until softened and moisture has been released, about 5-7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds.
3. Sprinkle the flour over the veggies and cook, stirring often until no white remains. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the chicken broth, milk, bouillon, Italian seasoning, and salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Bring the mixture to a simmer, stirring constantly until thickened, for about 5 minutes.
5. Stir in the turkey and peas, heat through.
6. Spread the mashed potatoes over top, then sprinkle with cheese.
7. Transfer the skillet to the oven and bake for 30 minutes or until the filling is bubbling along the edges, and the cheese is melted and lightly golden.
8. Allow to rest for 5 minutes before serving.



Knife skills

Types of knives

You don't need to own a 10-piece knife set. Most kitchen tasks can be completed with one or two knives.

- Chef's knife (8–10-inch blade): Almost all cutting can be done with this knife.
- Paring knife (3–4-inch blade): This is a smaller knife used for precise tasks like peeling or coring.
- Serrated knife/bread knife (8–10-inch blade): This knife has jagged edges or "teeth." It is used for slicing bread and soft produce like tomatoes.

Cutting with a knife safely

- Hold the knife with your dominant hand.
- Tuck your fingers toward your palm on the hand that is holding the food. Your hand should look like a bear claw.
- Lead down with the tip of the knife. Try to keep the tip close to the cutting board.

- Cut through the food in a sawing motion. Don't just push it down.
- When working with round foods like onions, carrots, or potatoes, cut them in half first. Creating a flat surface will prevent the food from rolling away.

Other knife safety tips

- Never put a knife in a sink full of water. This can lead to cuts when you grab things to clean.

- Never try to catch a falling knife.
- When passing a knife to another person, hand it off with the handle or set it down on the counter and let the person pick it up.
- Walk with the blade of the knife pointed toward the floor.
- Keep knives sharp. A dull knife requires more force when cutting it.



Thaw turkey safely

It may take up to 6 days to thaw your turkey depending on the weight. Always thaw the turkey completely before cooking. You can thaw the bird in the refrigerator or in cold water.

Wash your hands after handling raw meat and poultry products and before touching prepared foods. Allow about 24 hours of thawing for every 4-5 pounds

of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the fridge 1-2 days before cooking. Make sure your turkey is in a leak-proof plastic bag in the sink. The bag will prevent juice from spreading in the kitchen. Make sure your turkey is fully covered with tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes of thawing for each

pound of turkey. A thawed turkey in cold water must be cooked immediately.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 3 to 4 days or freeze to keep longer.

- [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov)

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

Gratitude during the holiday season begins with slowing down and noticing the small, good moments that often slip by. Appreciate the people who show up for you, the traditions that bring comfort, and the simple joys — warm lights, shared meals, quiet mornings. Express thanks openly, whether through a

handwritten note, a kind message, or a heartfelt conversation. Giving back, even in small ways, deepens that sense of appreciation. When you focus on connection rather than perfection, the season feels richer, calmer, and more meaningful.



Holiday closures

All meal sites are closed November 11 for Veteran's Day and November 26 and 27 for Thanksgiving.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Christine Ackley
Susan Auxter
Kathie Barrie
Betty Clifford
Kay Colihan
Margaret Dunckley
Marilyn Harbottle
Sharon Hayes
Preston Hein
Ann Jordan

Mona Koper
Sam Maness
Patricia Noel
Jillene Rector
Jeanette Rose
Jean Schauster
Phyllis Smilack
Linda Sorenson
Patsy Teague Morrison
Michelle Vogel



BIRTHDAY LIST

Our birthday list is compiled from completed 2026 consumer assessments.

Please accept our apology if we missed your birthday. If you want to complete an assessment, please see Kappe or Jenny for a form.

Contact us at: gcnewsletter.org/contact

SUBSCRIBE

Subscribe today to the Garfield County Older Adults Program Connection! If you don't already receive this newsletter regularly, subscribe for an email of the newsletter by calling 970-665-0041 or contact us at gcnewsletter.org/contact. There is no charge for subscription.



NEW LUNCH LOCATION

NEW CASTLE SENIOR LUNCH IS MOVING TO A LARGER, MORE ENJOYABLE LOCATION

Our New Castle senior lunch is getting a new home, and we are excited to share the news. Right now, our lunch site on Castle Valley Boulevard seats only 21 people. This makes it hard for many of our participants, especially those using walkers or wheelchairs, to move around comfortably. People often end up sitting very close together, and there isn't much space to get in and out of seats safely.

To make things easier and more enjoyable, Garfield County Older Adult Programs is moving

the New Castle lunch to the New Castle Recreation Center, located at 423 W. Main Street, right across from the New Castle Branch Library. This is scheduled to occur during the first week of January.

This new space can hold up to 150 people, which means:

- More room to spread out
- Easier seating for people with walkers or wheelchairs
- Safer movement around tables
- A more relaxed and welcoming environment

We want everyone to feel comfortable, safe, and able to enjoy lunch with friends. This new location gives us the space to do that.

We look forward to seeing you at the New Castle Recreation Center and sharing many great meals together.

RFTA MASTER PLAN

The Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) is developing a 20-year master plan for the Roaring Fork and Colorado River valleys. Share your input to help shape the future of transit. Take the [Fall 2026 survey](#). Over the next two years, community input will help shape priorities, identify future needs, and guide investments in transit service, facilities, funding, and organizational efforts for the next 20 years.

The project runs from summer 2026 through mid-2028 and includes three distinct phases:

The discover phase – hear from the community and understand current challenges (we are in this phase.)

The explore phase – develop and test options for future transit improvements.

The blueprint phase – create



recommendations and a roadmap for action.

You can get involved and stay informed during the process through pop-up events, open houses, online activities, and town halls.

The final plan will recommend future transit services, facilities, funding strategies, and near-, medium-, and long-term actions

to help RFTA meet the area's evolving transportation needs. RFTA will explore opportunities to make near-term improvements, allowing the community to see progress and benefits while the master plan is in development. Have questions or comments? Contact RFTA at: MasterPlan@RFTA.com www.rfta.com/plans-projects/

RESPITE CARE

What is respite care? A guide for caregivers

November is National Caregivers Month, a reminder that caregivers deserve care, too. Respite care offers short-term relief ranging from a few hours to several weeks, giving you time to rest, recharge, and manage personal needs while ensuring your loved one continues to receive support. Even occasional respite can protect your physical and emotional health and help prevent burnout.

What is respite care? Respite care provides temporary support for your care recipient, so you can take a break, attend appointments, visit family, travel, or simply rest. It can be scheduled or arranged quickly during emergencies.

Types of respite care

- Informal respite: Family, friends, or neighbors step in to help for short periods.
- In-home respite: A professional caregiver comes to the home, offering personal care, basic health monitoring, household tasks, and companionship.
- Adult day centers: Safe daytime programs offering supervision, social activities, meals, and limited health services. They typically serve adults with mild to moderate dementia, chronic conditions, or physical disabilities.
- Residential respite: Short-term stays in assisted living or nursing facilities — helpful when you need several days away.

What happens during respite care? Services vary based on your loved one's needs. Care may include meal preparation, light housekeeping, transportation, medication reminders, dressing, bathing, toileting, and basic health monitoring. Professional caregivers do not provide complex medical care.

How respite care helps caregivers Respite offers physical and emotional relief from constant caregiving demands. It creates time for self-care, errands, sleep, socializing, or hobbies. After a break, many caregivers return with renewed patience, energy, and perspective.

Who benefits most?

Respite care is ideal for anyone providing daily support to an older adult or someone with a disability or chronic condition—especially if you're balancing work, children, or other responsibilities. It's also useful during medical treatments, recovery periods, or travel.

Paying for respite care Costs vary by type and duration. Most services are paid out of pocket, but support may be available through:

- Medicare: Limited coverage under the Part A hospice benefit.
- Medicare Advantage: Some plans offer supplemental respite benefits.



- Long-term care insurance
- Veterans' benefits: Up to 30 days of respite in VA facilities, plus additional programs.
- Nonprofit programs: Support through the National Family Caregiver Support Program or state/local agencies.
- Medicaid waivers: Coverage varies by state.
- Employer health plans or EAPs

Finding respite care

Start with friends and family, health care providers, Centers for Independent Living, adult day center directories, the ARCH National Respite Locator, or your local Area Agency on Aging. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offered through Garfield County includes senior equipment and services program and the caregiver support program. Approval for programs must take place before a service is provided or equipment or materials are purchased. Contact Jacquelyn Sanchez at (970) 625-5282, ext. 3134. Must reside in Moffat, Rio Blanco, or Garfield counties.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER, Mahjong every Friday from 1-4 p.m. at the New Castle Community Center. No fee. No registration.

NOVEMBER 2, Spice Up the Month with Craft Kits at Rifle Library Every month will feature a new craft, and the kits will be available to pick up starting on the first Monday of each month. Anyone 18 and older can participate in this free series, but you must sign up in advance to be on the list to get a kit. Sign up at the front desk or call 970-625-3471.

NOVEMBER 3, 2026, General Election Day

NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24 Mah Jongg drop-in games all levels of players welcome at the [Glenwood Library](#), 1:30-3:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER 5, 12, 19, Golden Years Ice Cream Social, Thursdays, 1-2 p.m. at [Silt Library](#). Come chill with us outside on the patio for our social gathering just for seniors. Enjoy delicious ice cream and a fun variety of toppings. No registration needed – just drop by.

NOVEMBER 6, Dia de los Muertos, First Friday in Carbondale at the 4th Street Plaza, 5-8 p.m.

NOVEMBER 6, 7, 13, 14, at 7 p.m., November 8, 15 at 2 p.m. - Ken Ludwig's "Lend Me a Tenor" at [Ute Theater and Events Center](#) in Rifle. A comedy of mistaken identities, a presumed-dead opera superstar, and a frantic hotel mix-up just hours before a major performance. Tickets are \$27 before show days and \$33 at the door.

NOVEMBER 10, Sound bath. Tuesday 6 -7:30 p.m. Offered by [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#). \$10/person. Register by November 9. Call 970-384-6301.

NOVEMBER 10, Memory care support group meets at Sopris Lodge in Carbondale, 3-4 p.m., in-person support group for caregivers of individuals living with Alzheimer's and other dementias.

NOVEMBER 10, 24, Grief support group at [Grand River Health](#) in Rifle 5:30-6:30 p.m. Free, ongoing, in-person grief support for adults dealing with loss of a loved one.

NOVEMBER 12, Older adult road trip to New Castle to play BINGO. Thursday, 5:30 p.m. Offered by Glenwood Springs Community Center. \$20/person. Register by Nov 10. Call 970-384-6301.

NOVEMBER 13-December 24, Deck the Walls Holiday Market at [Carbondale Arts Gallery](#), 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Every holiday season, Carbondale Arts transforms its gallery space into a shop filled with artisan goods, candles, cards, jewelry, chocolates, ceramics, soaps, and more!



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 14, Holiday craft fair trip to the Eagle Winter Market & Holiday Fair, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. All attendees are asked to donate non-perishable food items for the Vail Valley Salvation Army food pantry. Cost is \$10 and leaves from the [Carbondale Recreation and Community Center](#). Pickup/drop-off is also available at Sopris Lodge and Crystal Meadows Senior Housing, Carbondale. If you are down valley and the trip is headed in that direction, you may be able to arrange a pickup/drop off at a neutral location. Please call CRCC at 970-510-1290.

NOVEMBER 14, Holiday craft fair at [Rifle Senior Center](#), 50 Ute Ave., 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

NOVEMBER 12-26, Gondola Giving Fall 2026 at [Glenwood Springs Adventure Park](#), bring a \$25 City Market gift card to the ticket office and receive four free gondola tickets. All donated gift cards will go directly to Lift-Up to help local families in need.

NOVEMBER 15, Fall Crafternoon at the Parachute Library, 2-4 p.m.

NOVEMBER 15, New Castle Lions Club Thanksgiving dinner is free and open to New Castle residents. Dinner includes turkey, ham, mashed potatoes, dressing, and cranberry sauce. From 5-6:30 p.m. at New Castle Recreation Department, 423 W. Main Street, New Castle (across from the library).

NOVEMBER 19, Memory Cafe meets at New Castle Library. This social gathering is for those with mild to moderate symptoms of memory loss and their caregivers. From 10:30 a.m.-12 noon.

NOVEMBER 21, Amanda V's Material Girl at the [Ute Theater](#) in Rifle, 7 p.m. Experience the ultimate pop celebration as Amanda V delivers a tribute to the Queen of Pop. This non-stop dance party spans Madonna's golden era from 1983 through 2000. \$30-35.

NOVEMBER 24, Silt downtown tree lighting ceremony/sitting with Santa 876-2353.

November 27, Hotel Colorado Holiday Lighting Ceremony. Music, Santa, fireworks, and the lighting of thousands of lights.

DECEMBER

Mountain Madrigal Singers are playing at Glenwood Church of Christ (now known as Fresh Start Fellowship), 260 Soccer Field Road, Glenwood Springs.

Saturday 12/5 at 7 p.m. Sunday 12/6 at 2 p.m.

Friday 12/11 at 7 p.m. Saturday 12/12 at 2 p.m.



WELL & WISE

Geri-Fit

Parachute Community Center – Parachute

Mondays and Wednesdays 10-11 a.m.

Grand Valley Rec Center – Battlement Mesa

Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.

Carbondale Library

Thursdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. – September 17 – November 5

Tai Chi For Health

Sunnyside Retirement – Glenwood Springs

Mondays 1-2 p.m., September 21 - November 9

If you would like to sign up for one of the above classes or a future class in your area please call Jenny at 970-625-5282, ext. 3275, for more information.

Garfield County Older Adult Programs offers classes for adults 60 and older. The recommended voluntary contribution for each Well & Wise 8-week series class is \$20 per person. Participants are encouraged to pay as they are able.

How to contribute:

- Make checks payable to GCDHS
- Mail to: 195 W. 14th Street, Rifle, CO 81650. Attn: Jenny Roberson.
- You may also place your donation in the secure box at any of our meal sites.

Grief in Motion

Every Monday. 9 -10 a.m. at the [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#). For those who have lost a loved one. Find comfort and connection during our outside (weather permitting) walks. Facilitated by Cath Adams, a certified grief coach. Free. It is recommended to wait six weeks following the passing of your loved one before joining the group. 970-384-6314.

Fall-prevention class

Every Wednesday. 9:45-10:30 a.m. at the [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#). Day pass/free for members. Contact Tiff with any questions. 970-384-6314.

Aqua Fit

Every Wednesday. 9:45-10:30 a.m. at the [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#). Day pass/Free for members. Contact Tiff with any questions. 970-384-6314.

Exercise for Parkinson's

Every Monday. 1-2 p.m. at the [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#). Designed for those with Parkinson's Disease, MS, or any other neuromuscular conditions. Contact Tiff if you are interested in participating. 970-384-6314.

NeuroPong

For those with neuromuscular challenges. This class is specifically designed to help individuals with Parkinson's disease, MS, or other neuromuscular conditions. This is at the [Glenwood Springs Community Center](#) on Thursdays from 2-3:30 p.m. 970-384-6314.



OLDER ADULT NUTRITION PROGRAM

Congregate meals are offered at seven locations across Garfield County. Lunch is served from 12 p.m. to 12:15 p.m. with additional time provided to enjoy the meal. Reservations help us plan accurate meal counts. New participants are welcome. Please call the site number 24 business hours in advance for Parachute, Rifle, Silt, and New Castle. Reservations for Glenwood Springs and Carbondale must be 48 business hours in advance. Please cancel as early as possible if your plans change.

Monthly menus are available at all meal sites, in the Connection newsletter, and on the Garfield County website. Enjoy a meal with friends - adults 60+ and their spouses may give a voluntary \$3 contribution (no obligation). Guests under 60 pay \$12 per meal.

Questions? Call 970-665-0041 or [email at gcnewsletter.org/contact](mailto:email@gcnewsletter.org/contact).

Congregate meal sites

Carbondale “Roaring Fork & Spoon”

The Orchard, 110 Snowmass Drive on Wednesdays.

For reservations, call (970) 665-0041. Call by noon on Monday.

Glenwood Springs “Chat n’ Chew”

Colorado Mountain College, 1402 Blake Avenue, on Tuesdays and Fridays.

For reservations please call (970) 665-0041 by noon on Friday for Tuesday reservations and call by Wednesday at noon for Friday reservations.

Glenwood Springs “Sunnyside Senior Meal”

Sunnyside Retirement Center, 601 21st Street, Tuesdays and Fridays. For reservations, call (970) 665-0041 by noon on Friday for Tuesday reservations and call by Wednesday at noon for Friday reservations.

New Castle “The Gathering”

New Castle Valley Senior Housing, 201 Castle Valley Blvd. on Mondays. For reservations call (970) 665-0041 before noon on Friday.

Silt “Meet ‘n Eat”

Silt at Silt Town Center, 600 Home Avenue, Wednesdays. For reservations, call (970) 665-0041. Call by noon on Tuesday.

Rifle “Senior Delight”

Rifle Senior Center, 50 Ute Avenue, Rifle on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. For reservations please call (970) 665-6540, 24 hours in advance.

Parachute Community Center

540 N. Parachute Ave., Mondays and Wednesdays. For reservations call (970) 665-0041 by noon on Friday and Tuesday.

Meals feedback

Your experience matters. If you have feedback about our meals, we would be grateful to hear from you. Leave a message at 970-625-5282, ext. 4045.

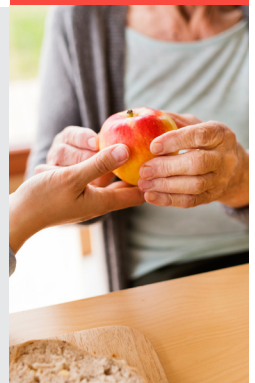
Email us at garfieldcountyco.gov/human-services/meals-feedback

Mail us a note at: Older Adult Programs feedback

Attention Jeff Lawson

195 W. 14th St., Building B

Rifle, CO 81650



JOIN US FOR LUNCH IN CARBONDALE



Garfield County Older Adult Programs invites you to join us for lunch every Wednesday at noon at The Orchard Church. Meals are served from 12 to 12:15 p.m., with plenty of time afterward to enjoy conversation and community.

For adults age 60 and older, the suggested donation is \$3. No payment is required, and you may contribute any amount, or nothing at all, and still receive a meal. The cost for guests under age 60 is \$12.

If you are age 60 or older, a short assessment is required before your first meal. Reservations are needed 48 hours in advance; please reserve by noon on Monday.

We hope you will join us for a good meal and great company.

Make a reservation

To make a reservation, call 970-665-0041 or stop by on Wednesdays between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to meet our staff and sign up.

The November menu is included for your review in the newsletter, with nutritional information on the back.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR GARFIELD COUNTY PART D PLANS

It is important to review your Medicare Part D prescription drug plan every year during Open Enrollment because plans can change their costs, provider networks, and drug formularies annually. One important change this year is Garfield County residents will no longer have any zero premium Part D plans available for enrollees who do not receive low-income subsidies in 2027. Medicare beneficiaries who currently have a zero premium Part D plan will need to call their provider and set up a premium payment plan to ensure their bill is being paid monthly. If they fail to pay the premium they will lose coverage and have to pay out of pocket for all their prescription drugs until January 1, 2028.

If you have any questions, or would like to schedule an Open Enrollment appointment, please reach out to
Laura Kay at 970-896-6210
or programs@highcountryvolunteers.org.



HIGH COUNTRY VOLUNTEERS

It's time for Medicare open enrollment!

Call High Country Volunteers at 970-896-6210 for a free appointment with a certified Medicare counselor to review your prescription drug plan and make sure you've got the best coverage for 2027.

Enroll October 15 through December 7

Coverage begins January 1



Enroll Oct. 15 - Dec. 7



Coverage
begins
Jan. 1

THE TRAVELER

Who is the Traveler for?

The Garfield County Traveler is for people who cannot drive or take public transportation because of permanent or temporary disability. For those who are 70 years of age and older, a disability is not required.

Service covers a 2-mile radius of Highway 82 and I-70 between the communities of Battlement Mesa, Rifle, Silt, New Castle, Glenwood Springs, and Carbondale.

Operating Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Contact us

Find out if you are eligible to take the bus and how to apply for service.

(970) 384-4855

email: paratransit@rfta.com

Traveler reservations must be made by 3 p.m. on the business day prior to your trip. Space is limited but reservations can be made up to two weeks in advance.



GARFIELD COUNTY OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS

Older Adult Programs

Nutrition staff

970-625-5282, ext. 3263

Older Adult Programs

Well and Wise staff

970-625-5282, ext. 3275

Nutritionist

970-625-5200, ext. 2036

Online newsletter

gcnewsletter.org

Garfield County Older Adult Program

970-665-0041 for questions, reservations, cancellations or to volunteer for Rifle, Parachute, New Castle and Silt.

gcnewsletter.org/contact

For meals reservations, cancellations and volunteer opportunities in Glenwood Springs or Carbondale, please call Valley Meals & More at 970-404-1193.

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