

THE SILVER TOP

PCSC Fosters Intergenerational Friendships

by James Fly

The Park County Senior Center exists not only for senior citizens but also for residents of all ages as the center seeks to foster intergenerational friendships, according to Garrick Faust, executive director. Faust emphasized this during a visit by representatives of the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation who were there to assess a request for funds to pay the salary of a proposed outreach coordinator for the center. They were given a tour of the center, including the soon-to-be opened fitness center located in the basement while a local school jazz band entertained the center's residents on the main floor.

The proposed outreach coordinator, Faust explained to the group, would reach out to schools, businesses and other organizations to involve them in the activities of the center, popularly known now as "The Hub." One of the spokes in the hub is to connect seniors and youth in mutually beneficial relationships.

"We want to connect youth and seniors because they both have similar issues such as loneliness and isolation. Both seniors and youth have a lot to offer each other," Faust said.

He pointed out that Park High School, for instance, is located only two blocks away from the center and that many students walk by there after school. Faust envisions having a snack bar where they could hang out, do their homework and interact with seniors. Seniors could also help tutor students who want and need it.

PCSC board member Lisa Harreld remarked, "Schools are always asking for help, particularly in the area of reading. We want to bring the youth in to the center and take the seniors out to the schools." The center has already opened its doors to a homeschool group that meets there every Thursday. "Bringing the youth in breathes new life here," said Faust.

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PCSC Executive Director Garrick Faust welcomes representatives of the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation during their recent visit. Faust presented the need for an outreach coordinator.

Submissions Wanted!

Dear Community,

Contribute to our upcoming newsletter and let's showcase the richness of our collective experiences. Share anecdotes, recipes, poems, or timeless advice by the 15th of each month. Drop off submissions at the front desk or email pcsc.newsletter@gmail.com. Let's weave a tapestry of our shared journey.

Thank you for sharing your stories and being a vital part of PCSC!



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A recent article in *Women's Health* praised the benefits of intergenerational friendship. Chief among them: Young people can learn from the life experiences of seniors and in turn, seniors are energized by the vitality of the young. Peer relationships among both groups are too often competitive while intergenerational friendships tend to be less so, and more compatible in many cases. Intergenerational friendships can provide youth with a system of support in the absence of parental mentorship, while seniors benefit from the attention and care of their younger friends.

The American Psychological Association cites that the best predictor of health and wellness is our connection to others. The Park County Senior Center wants to make the connection between seniors and youth in this area stronger both now and in the future.



LOOK UP AT THE SKY DAY – MONTANA STYLE

On April 14, take a moment to admire Montana's vast sky. From towering clouds over the mountains to golden sunsets on the plains, our Big Sky Country never disappoints. Watch eagles soar, sunlight break through the clouds, or, after dark, a sky full of stars. You might even catch the northern lights!

HOW TO OBSERVE LOOK UP AT THE SKY DAY

- Spend time watching the clouds.
- Note the different shapes and how they move.
- At night, investigate the stars. Search the heavens for constellations, planets, and the Milkyway.
- Watch for a meteor shower or a single falling star. Over the horizon, an aurora borealis might begin to dance bringing on a beautiful show.
- Share your findings using #LookUpAtTheSkyDay on social media.

Step outside, look up, and enjoy the view. In Montana, the sky is always worth watching.
#BigSkyViews #LookUpAtTheSkyDay

Volunteers Needed!

The Park County Senior Center is seeking dedicated volunteers to join our team and make a positive impact in the lives of our senior community members. Whether you have a few hours a week or more, your time and talents can help us provide essential services and enriching activities to seniors in our area. If you are interested in making a difference, please contact Garrick Faust at this address: garrick@parkcountyseniorcenter.org or call 406-333-2276. Your involvement can bring joy and support to those who need it most!

Blue Grass Plus Music Jam Continues!



Join us for the Bluegrass Plus Music Jam every 2nd and 4th Saturday, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, at the Park County Senior Center in Livingston, Montana! Musicians, bring your instruments and passion as we create a vibrant musical community. Share your talents and immerse yourself in the lively atmosphere. It's a perfect opportunity to connect with fellow music enthusiasts. Let the strings resonate and the melodies flow in this harmonious gathering. See you there!



The Grandma Stand Connection

Sheryl Hopkins, who recently co-conducted interviews on loneliness and connection for the Park County Health Department, shares this heartwarming story about a "grandma stand" in New York City that has attracted and benefitted many people, including, locals, tourists, young and old.

Realizing how empathetic and wise his grandma was, a social media executive in the city set up a "grandma stand" where his grandmother could offer a free listening ear virtually from her residence in Seattle. Set up in various locations throughout the city, the grandma stand became very popular but had to be shut down when his grandmother, who was over 100, passed away.

The stand was missed and had proven so popular that several years later he revived the stand with a rotating group of volunteer grandmas, mostly in person, who offer the same wisdom and comfort, all free of charge. The stand brings to mind Lucy's booth in the Peanuts cartoon but that's where the similarity ends. The grandmas do not charge for their time, nor do they dispense professional psychological advice.

Each week the grandson writes out a weekly question such as "What brought you joy this week?" to encourage interaction between the grandmas and passersby. Might we have some grandmas in Park County who would like to do the same. And how about some grandpas too?

The Silvertip is including the link to the story so our readers can read it in detail if they wish and possibly become inspired to do the same! That link is <https://bit.ly/4irm15c>

More Thoughts on Meditation

Christine Hillegass, Psy.D.

I'm back in town after spending February in New Orleans. I have to admit, I didn't meditate once. It's hard for me to make time—working out, socializing, and other distractions get in the way. But I know meditation pays off. It helps me recognize negative thought patterns: What do I need to do? What did I do wrong? These thoughts waste time and energy and don't lead to happiness. When we learn to notice them, we can lessen their power. It's a skill—challenging, but learnable.

For me, belonging to a meditation group works best. If I commit to a regular meeting, I stick with it. If I meditate more on my own, great, but at least I practice when the group meets. So, come join us!

Chris is a retired psychologist who practiced in Livingston for 25 years. Her biweekly meditation group meets at the Senior Center every other Tuesday at 1:00 P.M.

When I turned 2 I was really anxious, because I'd doubled my age in a year. I thought, if this keeps up, by the time I'm 6 I'll be 90. - **Steven Wright**

Calling For Ideas for Activities at the Senior Center

Ignite creativity at Park County Senior Center! Have a community activity idea? Lisa Harreld, Board Member, is ready to chat. Let's transform our center into a hub of vibrant experiences. Reach out, share your vision, and let's make the Senior Center even more amazing together! Contact Lisa at the Center (406-333-2276 or 651-270-4168).

#CommunityCollaboration #ParkCountySeniors



Your membership dues are integral to supporting activities and programs serving the senior community of Park County, Montana.

Thank you for your continued commitment!

Membership/Renewal Application

Yes! I want to join Park County Senior Center!
(1-year membership = \$25 per person)

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Birthday:

Please make checks payable to **Park County Senior Center** or **PCSC**

Mail to: 206 S Main St., Livingston, MT 59047

Park County Senior Citizens Corp. is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization

EIN# 81-0302200 406-333-2276

Memberships may also be purchased online at:

www.parkcountyseniorcenter.org


Senior
MEMBERSHIP
—
\$45/YEAR
⇒ \$6 Movies Tickets
(\$3 savings/ticket)
⇒ 1 free popcorn/month
AGES 60+

The Jazz Ambassadors
of the
U.S. Army Field Band-
Free Concert
at
Park High School
Gymnasium
on April 29, 2025
@ 7:00 PM
Make reservations @
<https://bit.ly/3EOobLE>

Your Ageless Wellness,

What It Means to Be a Senior

A New Beginning, Not an Ending



There's a misconception that hitting the age of 60 or 65 is like reaching the "end" of something. But for many, this stage of life is when they can finally focus on the things that matter most. No more juggling hectic work schedules, raising kids, or chasing that elusive "next step." Retirement, or the transition into senior years, is often a time of freedom—freedom to pursue passions, travel, reconnect with friends, or even start new ventures. It's like standing on a fresh starting line, with life experience as your guide.

Instead of viewing senior years as winding down, think of them as an opportunity to lean into who you've always wanted to be, but maybe you didn't have the time for. Whether it's learning to play an instrument, picking up painting, or simply having the time to care for your health, this phase is more of a new beginning than the end of a story.

The Wisdom and Experience Advantage

You can't buy wisdom. You must earn it by living through decades of life experiences, lessons, and challenges. Seniors are walking encyclopedias of stories—having navigated careers, relationships, and life's unpredictable twists and turns. The beauty of aging is the perspective it brings.

Think about it this way: while a younger person might make decisions based on impulse or trends, seniors have the gift of hindsight. They've seen enough to understand what really matters. This translates into a calmer, more measured approach to life's inevitable ups and downs. It's like being able to see the whole picture, instead of just one part of the puzzle. And this wisdom isn't just personal, it's something that can be passed down to younger generations.

The Body Speaks Louder Over Time

There's no denying it: the body changes as we age. We may not bounce back from injury as quickly or handle physical tasks with the same ease. However, those changes don't mean we're done. In fact, physical movement becomes even more important in senior years.

Exercise isn't about running marathons or lifting heavy weights; it's about maintaining independence. It's about being able to get up from a chair without assistance, walk without fear of falling, or simply have the energy to enjoy daily life. Strength training, yoga, swimming, these are activities that seniors can thrive in, regardless of age. In fact, research shows that regular movement can help prevent or delay conditions like arthritis, osteoporosis, and heart disease.

Being a senior doesn't mean stopping—it means moving smarter. The goal isn't just to live longer, it's to live better. The message here is clear: the more you move, the more you keep your independence.

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More Than Just Age—It's a Mindset

This is a big one. We've all seen people who seem "old" in their 50s and others who seem vibrant in their 80s. What's the difference? Often, it's a mindset. Those who embrace aging as a phase filled with possibility tend to live more active, engaged lives. They focus on what they can do, rather than what they can't.

A positive mindset can shape how seniors handle life's transitions, whether it's downsizing, health changes, or even dealing with loss. There's also growing research showing that people with an optimistic outlook on aging live longer and healthier lives. How we think about aging impacts how we experience it. So, instead of seeing the senior years as "slowing down," think of them as a time to reinvent, rediscover, and renew purpose.

Technology and Today's Seniors

Technology is no longer the sole domain of younger generations. Seniors today are navigating smartphones, tablets, and social media like pros. The rise of telemedicine has made it easier to manage health care from home, while wearable fitness trackers help them stay on top of daily movement goals.

Let's not forget the social aspect. With a swipe or a tap, seniors can stay connected with friends and family all over the world, breaking the isolation that sometimes comes with aging. Whether it's learning new skills online, reading the latest news, or just video-chatting with grandkids, technology has opened new doors. It's proof that seniors are more adaptable than ever—an essential skill for thriving in the modern world.

Challenges Still Exist, But So Do Solutions

Of course, being a senior isn't all smooth sailing. Health concerns may pop up—heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, or cognitive decline. Financial stress, especially for those on a fixed income, can also be a concern. And let's not ignore loneliness. Many seniors deal with isolation as their social circles shrink, either due to retirement or losing loved ones.

But the silver lining is that we're living in a time where solutions are more accessible than ever. Communities, programs, and initiatives focused on senior wellness are growing. Everything from accessible fitness classes to mental health resources is at their fingertips. Seniors are learning that aging doesn't mean settling for decline. Instead, they're empowered to advocate for themselves, stay active, and seek out resources to maintain their quality of life.





Poetry in the Windows Showcases Local Talent

This April, downtown Livingston will transform into an open-air gallery of words as part of the Poetry in the Windows event. Local poets will have their work displayed in the windows of various businesses, inviting residents and visitors to pause, reflect, and appreciate the power of poetry. This annual celebration, held in honor of National Poetry Month, brings literary art into everyday spaces, making poetry accessible to all.

We are especially proud to announce that **Park County Senior Center Newsletter** co-editor James Fly will have three of his poems featured in this year's showcase. His work, along with that of other local poets, will be visible throughout downtown Livingston for the entire month of April. Be sure to take a stroll, explore the participating businesses, and enjoy the unique blend of poetry and community spirit.

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Speaking of Solutions...

At the Park County Senior Center, we believe in taking action. That's why we built **The Hub**—a brand-new fitness and wellness facility designed specifically for seniors and mobility-challenged individuals.

At **The Hub**, you'll find:

- Senior-friendly fitness equipment
- Strength, balance, and mobility classes
- Educational workshops on nutrition and wellness
- Social spaces to connect with others
- A welcoming, supportive community

It's not just about exercise, it's about you. Whether you're looking to stay strong, make new friends, or learn something new, The Hub is here for you.

Come see what we're all about! Visit us at **206 South Main, Livingston, MT**, or give me a call at **406-333-2276**. You can also reach me by email at **garrick@parkcountyseniorcenter.org** for more information.

Article by **Garrick Fulmer-Faust**,
Executive Director, Park County Senior Center



WRITING YOUR STORY

Wonder what it would take to write your life-story? Join us for a **free** **three- part** writing workshop with local writer **Surya Milner**.

All ages and all experience levels welcome.

Surya Milner is a writer and professor at Montana State University. She writes about places: the American west in reality and mythology, her mother's homeland of India, and the many places in between. She holds an MFA in creative writing and MA in English Literature from Northwestern University.

Tuesdays
April 15, 22, 29

5:30 - 6:30 pm

Park County
Senior Center
(206 S. Main St.)

visit elkriverarts.org or email director@elkriverarts.org for more info