

Friendly Neighbors Newsletter

Volume 27 – Issue 4 – July/August 2026

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President's Message

Hi everyone,

As some of you may already know, Area Agency on Aging Regions I and II in northern Idaho have combined. As a result, the headquarters is now located in Coeur d'Alene with the Area

Agency on Aging of North Idaho (AAANI). The AAANI does not handle home-delivered meals to seniors on Medicaid, as our Lewiston office did.

Friendly Neighbors decided to apply to be a Medicaid meals provider for those in our area. We have been moving through the application process and are nearing final approval. We are receiving training on being a Medicaid provider. Since June 1 we have continued to provide home-delivered meals (at our own expense) to our current Medicaid recipients. We hope to be paid for those meals once we can bill Medicaid for them.

Also, our kitchen freezer failed; the new one will be in the basement, where it is cooler. Not having it in the kitchen will help keep the kitchen cooler as well. The freezer is an important appliance, since most of the home-delivered meals are frozen prior to being delivered. Thanks, Greg, for taking the lead in this.

Finally, if you haven't noticed, summer is upon us. Stay where it's cool. It's easy to become overheated in this weather, and that's not good for us older people.

John Carlson, President



Fourth-of-July Congregate Lunch



Eleven FN members (including board members) gathered at a local fast-food joint on June 30 for the fourth of July week's only congregational meal. The salads, ice cream, and burgers and fries were yummy and the fellowship engaging. Don't miss out next year!



Summer Nutrition Begins and Ends with Hydration



When the summer heats up, the best way to beat the heat is by eating foods that will hydrate you—which generally means water-rich, nutrient-dense produce like

berries, melons, and summer squash. The following are tips to help you fuel active days while staying cool.

- **Hydration Starts with Food:** Twenty percent of daily fluid intake comes from food. Water-dense favorites, like cucumbers and watermelon, which are composed of over 90% water.
- **Vary It with Seasonal Superfoods:** Highlight peak-summer produce. Blueberries are packed with antioxidants; peaches and tomatoes provide essential vitamins A and C to protect the skin and boost immunity.
- **Lighter Grilling and Prep:** For main meals, choose foods that you can lightly grill and that are easier for the body to digest in hot weather, avoiding heavy, oven-cooked meals: lean proteins (like salmon and grilled chicken) and plant-based meals.
- **Natural Beverages:** Limit drinking sugary drinks and those made with alcohol in favor of fruit-infused water, iced herbal teas, or electrolyte-replenishing coconut water.



Actionable Takeaways

- **Track Fluids:** Along with drinking adequate water daily, incorporate at least two servings of water-rich produce like berries or summer squash into every meal.
- **Shop Local:** The Moscow Farmers Market is your go-to place to take advantage of picking up affordable, locally grown seasonal crops.
- **Create Infused Water:** Replace sugary beverages by adding combinations like cucumber and mint or raspberry and lemon to pitchers of cold water.

Birthdays of Our Members

August

1 Randy Paulin
1 Lois Reed
6 Linda McHargue
7 Miriam McBride
8 Kathryn Cree
9 Jolene Bordewick
12 Celia Boland
30 Susan Warren
31 Abby Hudson
31 Joy Irving
31 Jim McCloskey



September

9 Janet Hume
10 Rose Vanderhaak
12 Lisa Cochran
16 Ed Townsend
25 Steve Barr
25 Barbara Beauchamp
27 Ray Morris
28 Dianne Cole
28 Sue Green

Upcoming Art Classes at the Library

Senior Art Workshop #1: Expressionism and Intuitive Painting

Wednesdays between 8/5 and 8/26. In the first of the two four-week classes, explore the expressive possibilities of color, texture, movement, and mark making in a supportive, judgment-free environment. Use acrylic paint and a variety of tools to experiment with intuitive techniques that encourage play, creativity, and personal expression rather than “perfect” painting.

Registration is required and space is limited to ten participants. Please call the Latah County Library District at (208)-882-3925 to register; registration opens July 24.

Senior Art Workshop #2: Flower Impressionism Painting

Wednesdays between 9/9 and 9/30. In the second of the two four-week classes, celebrate the beauty of flowers through the expressive language of impressionist painting. Inspired by gardens, wildflowers, and the ever-changing play of light and color, explore loose brushwork, vibrant palettes, and layered textures to capture the feeling of nature rather than close detail.

Registration is required and space is limited to ten participants. Please call the Latah County Library District at (208)-882-3925 to register; opening date for registration to be determined.

In the Spotlight: Home-Delivery Meal Service



According to the United States Government Accountability Office, in 2024 86% of low-income older adults who experience food insecurity do not receive home-delivered meals. That's very concerning, given that a 2025 *Journal of the American Medical Association Network Open* study determined that those who receive these services benefit in a multitude of ways.

The meals strikingly improve a recipient's overall health, with better nutrition and lowered stress levels, to mention just a few of the contributing factors. Indeed, researchers also found that the nutrition and social contact elders receive during each visit often help some elders delay living in a nursing home.

Thankfully, Friendly Neighbors (FN) delivers meals to Moscow seniors who qualify for the service. Mary Matteson is one of many drivers who distributes them during the noon hour every Tuesday and Thursday. She serves about 8–12 clients, most who live in apartments or trailer homes. Clients receive not only a hot lunch of freshly cooked food, but two or three kitchen-prepped freezer meals and a bag of snacks, like yogurt and granola bars. “Some have dietary issues,” says Mary, who checks the labeled bags before each delivery to make sure folks receive the proper version.

She's been volunteering for the past three or four years, offering brief, friendly fellowship along the way. Sometimes elders update her about a topic mentioned from a previous visit or tell her in general about their day. By the end of an exchange, all of them are smiling and some even bestow on her a blessing.

The short conversations are some of the hidden benefits of a service like this, moments that in Mary's experience occasionally involve well-timed wellness checks. During one memorable visit, Mary happened upon a client whose back had seized up, so she was able to call the police for him so he could get the help he needed. Given all the health benefits and positive exchanges between driver and elder, it is clear that meal-delivery programs, as the study concludes, “provide. . . a substantial return on investment.”



On July 1, 2026 a new contract went into effect with the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho (AAANI) in Coeur d'Alene to provide congregate and home-delivered meals; this contract does not include meals for Medicaid recipients, as our former contract did. To fill this gap in its services, Friendly Neighbors is applying to become a Medicaid provider. Until the processing of Medicaid billing can begin, Friendly Neighbors has continued to deliver meals to its Medicaid recipients and absorbing the meal costs until the billing process can begin.

If you are over sixty years of age and are interested in receiving this service and its holistic boon (or you know of someone who could), for non-Medicaid delivered meals call the AAANI at 208-667-3179 to see if the senior qualifies for the meals. If so, the AAANI will contact Friendly Neighbors to enroll the senior for meals.

For seniors who are on Medicaid, please be patient. Friendly Neighbors is going through the training and steps to become a Medicaid provider. Our number for Medicaid calls is 986-296-1105.

Since researchers of the 2025 study calculated that one year of home-delivered meal costs nearly equal that of a single-day hospital stay or ten days in a nursing home, home-delivered meals are a great bargain.



To “HEL” and Back by Kay Keskinen

I flew to HEL in late June, the Helsinki, Finland airport, that is, on Finnair. All four of my grandparents emigrated from Finland to the US and came to northern Minnesota where they met, married, and made (in essence) Finnish children. Two of those children married and then made, essentially, Finnish children—my three siblings and me. My generation has had its DNA tested at the Ancestry site which revealed that our DNA is 99.8% Finnish.

I was the only one among my parents and siblings who had not visited Finland, so I thought I had better go while I was still able to travel. While there for nine days I connected with the families of three of my grandparents. What a joy it was to learn more about my family's roots and heritage and meet family in person.

I also learned that in Finland, I was not a “senior,” I was a “pensioner.” When I went to buy a train ticket or ticket to an event, I could get the reduced “pensioner” price.

This article includes a few highlights of my travels. The Helsinki hotel room I had for June 20 (Midsummer—sunset was at about 10 PM and sunrise around 2 AM) included a sauna in my room. I enjoyed taking a sauna, I hadn't had one for many years. The most common question I was asked in Finland was, “How many saunas do you have?” I had to answer, “None, but I had two growing up in Minnesota.”

I found Finland to be clean and safe; I walked in downtown Helsinki by myself late one evening and was not worried at all about my safety. One cousin told me that there are no homeless people in Finland. Finland has many social services for the homeless.

I went to a shopping mall with a cousin and noticed the escalators did not have steps; instead, the rolling walkways were flat to accommodate strollers, walkers, and such. Have you ever driven around and around in a parking garage searching for a place to park? Here is a photo of how Finland helps the drivers: each parking spot has a light above it; the light is green if no car is parked in it or it's red if the spot is used.



I have two branches of cousins in Pori. My cousin Sylvia and her husband spend much of their summers on their sailboat (see photo). Note the three solar panels on the boat that keep their food chilled and the wireless router on the back of a mast for Internet access.

I ate salmon every day, once I had it twice. My cousin Tapani who lives in Vantaa will smoke salmon whenever family visits.

Turku used to be the capital of Finland when Sweden controlled Finland. When Russia took control, they moved the capital to Helsinki to bring it closer to them. I toured a castle in Turku; I am sure glad I didn't live in those times.



I wanted to see the very modern Oodi Library in Helsinki which was within walking distance of my hotel. I was a little tired after I arrived and walked up two long flights of stairs. What was on the third floor? Rocking chairs!! Just what I needed to rest for a few minutes!

Thanks for coming along with my journey to my grandparents' homeland.

P.S. I left Helsinki at 5:00 PM for my flight to Seattle; I arrived in Seattle at 4:40 PM. I was twenty minutes younger than when I left!

