



The Senior Connection

March 2021

VOLUME 3

ISSUE 7

St. Joseph County Commission on Aging Newsletter



**March is
National
Meals on
Wheels Month**

*Thank You to Our Meals on Wheels Team
You Guys Rock!*

St. Joseph County
Commission on Aging

Rivers Enrichment Center
& Residence

1200 W. Broadway Street
Three Rivers, MI 49093
269-279-8083
1-800-641-9899
8am - 4pm (M-F)

Oaks Enrichment Center

306 N. Franks Avenue
Sturgis, MI 49091
269-279-8083
1-800-641-9899
8am - 4pm (M-F)

www.sjccoa.com
FAX: (269) 273-7058



Don't Forget

Daylight
Savings Time

begins at 2:00 a.m. on
Sunday, March 14

Like us on Facebook!

Follow us on
Instagram (sjccoa)

and YouTube



Meals on Wheels...More than Just a Meal

On March 22, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 and established a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. These critical programs – commonly referred to as Meals on Wheels – have delivered more than just nutritious meals to homebound seniors in virtually every community across the country. The dedicated staff and volunteers who deliver these meals each week provide a vital lifeline and connection to the community, which are sometimes all it takes to keep our senior neighbors at home, where they want to be. Meals on Wheels programs have come together each March to celebrate this proven collaboration of local community organizations, businesses, all levels of government and compassionate individuals to ensure that our seniors are not forgotten.

What about the Meals on Wheels program in St. Joseph County?

Operated by the Commission on Aging, we serve 200,000 meals each year. WOW! That's pretty amazing. Our program provides nutritious hot, cold, weekend frozen, breakfast bags and liquid supplement meals to more than 275 homebound older adults. Additionally, this program provides contact with frail and at-risk older adults five days a week. This safety and wellness check has helped numerous seniors needing emergency assistance.

Making those connections with clients is what our Meals on Wheels drivers love the most about their job. "I just like taking care of people," said Roger Miller, who joined the COA in April 2019. "We try to figure out their needs and we try to encourage them. Some of them don't see anybody else and they just need the company."

Another one of the COA drivers said he enjoys meeting new people and making friends.

"The seniors make me smile just as much as I make them smile," said Bill McLaughlin, a COA driver since April 2018. "That's what we're here for. It's not a job if you like what you are doing."

In addition to the meals, the Nutrition Department also ensures that seniors who are most at risk for loneliness and isolation receive support through our Friendly Reassurance program. Volunteers contact isolated seniors to chat and/or check in with them weekly. The program allows cards, small gifts and treats delivered to all Meals on Wheels recipients. In December 2020 a COA blanket was given to each Meals on Wheels client.

The team that works on Meals on Wheels at the COA make it look easy to serve that much food each year.

"We have an incredible team, from our executive director to our kitchen staff - Angie and Serena - to our drivers to our support staff, Jeanette and Cassie," said Nutrition Manager Katie Hughes. "They all are committed to the seniors in this county, and it really shows how much they care."



MORE MEALS ON WHEELS PHOTOS & NEWS ON PAGE 7

Project Advisory

Council (P.A.C.) Meeting

Friday, March 12 - TR @ 10am

Tuesday, March 16 - ST @ 11am

See story on this page for more details. Meetings will take place via Zoom. Please call the COA at 279-8083 for an email invitation.

These meetings are to be led by the seniors - it's a great way to get involved in your center.

Severe Weather Closings

To find out if the COA will be closed during severe weather, we suggest you obtain information from the following radio and television stations:

WLKM AM 1510 or WLKM FM 96

WBET FM/AM 99.3

WIN 98.5

WWMT (CBS) Channel 3

WOOD (NBC) Channel 8

WZZM (ABC) Grand Rapids

WSBT (CBS) South Bend

WNDU (NBC) South Bend

The COA is supported by funds from:

- ♦ Administration on Aging
- ♦ Michigan Office of Services to the Aging
- ♦ Branch-St. Joseph County Area Agency on Aging IIIC
- ♦ St. Joseph County Senior Millage
- ♦ Older Americans Act
- ♦ Older Michiganians Act
- ♦ Donations

The COA complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

P.A.C. Meetings are for YOU!

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Our Project Advisory Council meetings (formerly known as Senior Advisory Council Meetings) are an opportunity for older adults to get together and discuss what is happening at the COA, particularly when it comes to lunches served at the centers and our life enrichment programs.

These meetings are meant to be led by the seniors with a COA staff member or two present to answer any questions.

We need more older adults to get involved in our P.A.C. meetings and we know it is difficult right now with the centers not offering any group activities, but once we do start that again, we sure hope more of you will participate.

We have changed the meeting date and time for Three Rivers as well as the frequency of the P.A.C. meetings. They are scheduled to meet on the second Friday of the month at 10 a.m. on a quarterly basis. The next meeting is on Friday, March 12 and will be a Zoom meeting. Please call the COA for an email invitation.

The Sturgis Enrichment Center is continuing with a monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 16 and this, too, will be a Zoom meeting. Please call the COA for an email invitation.

If you have any questions about Project Advisory Council, please reach out to Nutrition Manager Katie Hughes. A flyer with 2021 meeting dates will be posted at each center and it is also on our website (www.sjcco.com)

Hope to "see" you there!

Update on Enrichment Centers and Opening for Activities & Lunch

The centers are open but at the time this newsletter went to print, group activities and congregate lunches were still on hold. These decisions are following guidelines issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Resources. If you would like to read more about the state's COVID-19 response, please visit its website at: <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/>

There is A LOT of information on that page, but specific statements about what is allowed at senior centers can be found if you click on a box near the top of the page that says **New: MDHHS EPIDEMIC ORDERS**. Once you click on that it takes you to a page that lists all the orders and click on the one that says February 4 Gatherings and Face Mask Order. In that order, there is information about senior centers.

If you need help finding this information, or you have any questions, please contact the COA at 279-8083. As soon as we receive direction from the Area Agency on Aging and/or the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services that it is permissible to expand our offerings at our centers we will announce it on our website, our Facebook page and local media.

We're Celebrating St. Patrick's Day!

We sure are sad that we can't celebrate St. Patrick's Day together this year, but we are offering a special treat on Wednesday, March 17th. Stop by either center between 10 a.m. and Noon and we will have a Mint Chocolate Chip Klondike Bar for you.

You gotta eat lots of green things on St. Patrick's Day so we're here to help you achieve that goal. **You must call the COA by Thursday, March 11th to let us know you would like a Klondike Bar - and make sure to tell us from which center you will pick up your treat. Our number is 279-8083.**

Did you know that when you call the COA the phone rings simultaneously at both our centers? And, did you know that our sign-up sheets for all of our activities, lunches to go, foot doctor appointments, use of the computers or exercise equipment is all on the computer in a document that any staff member can access.

So, if you are calling the COA to sign up for something or to make an appointment - it doesn't matter what staff member you are talking to, or in what building they are located - we all have access to the sign-up sheets.

Other ways we are celebrating St. Patrick's Day is a craft kit to go that is just adorable - using wood to make a leprechaun hat. Details on the craft are below.

Finally, we are having a guessing game of how many Skittles we have in a jar. We picked Skittles because their motto is "taste the rainbow" and rainbows are a big part of St. Patrick's Day, too. We actually are giving away three jars! Amanda will post a video on Facebook on St. Patrick's Day asking for you to make guesses right on Facebook. But for those of you not on Facebook, we will have a jar of Skittles located at each center at the reception desk from March 1-7. Make your guess at either center and whoever guesses the closest to the amount in the jar wins the jar of fruity candy.



Irish Hat

WHEN: Friday, March 12

Kits can be picked up at either center between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Please call the COA to reserve your kit. We encourage you to call as soon as possible since our craft kits fill up fast, and make sure you specify what center from which you plan to pick up your kit. Reminder: If you sign up and change your mind about picking up the kit, please call! We often have a waiting list and sure would love to give that kit away to someone else.

It's Hard to Believe But Spring is Just Around the Corner!

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We are so excited to offer a craft kit that will definitely get you in the mood for Spring and Easter! We are looking forward to warmer temperatures and a chance to be outside again. These past few months have been pretty darn cold.

These cute wineglasses are painted with Easter colors and then filled with straw and an artificial succulent plant on top. Perfect for the windowsill or kitchen table, bathroom counter - just about anywhere in your home it will give you and your visitors a feeling of Spring.

WHEN: Friday, March 26

Craft kits can be picked up at either center between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Please call the COA to reserve your kit and we encourage you to call as soon as possible as we only have a limited supply. **Reminder: If you sign up and change your mind about picking up the kit, please call! We often have a waiting list and sure would love to give that kit away to someone else.**

Mardi Gras Celebration: Take Out Style!

The Life Enrichment and Nutrition teams put together a fun treat bag for older adults to help celebrate Mardi Gras. The COA gave out cups of gumbo, chocolate coins, beads and a story about the first cocktail invented in the United States, which just happened to be in New Orleans.

Everyone also got a piece of baby cake and two lucky winners found the baby hidden in their cake. Christine Johnson of Colon and Wanda Hogle of Constantine each received a special gift.

Our Life Enrichment team - Ruth and Amanda - handed out the bags and wore lots of beads and masks to get us - and our older adults - in the Mardi Gras spirit. It was fun seeing everyone - even if it was just for a minute.



March 15-21 is Brain Awareness Week!

We think it's a pretty good idea to be aware of your brain, but all joking aside, this week is part of a global campaign to foster public enthusiasm and support for brain science. The human brain directs almost everything we do. It controls our voluntary movements and it regulates involuntary activities such as breathing and heartbeat. The brain stores our memories and allows us to feel emotions and gives us our personalities.

Made up of 100 billion nerve cells with more than 100 trillion connections, the brain is the most complex organ in your body. In fact, it is the most complicated arrangement of matter in the known universe.

So, let's do our part and learn more about the human brain. Here are a few statements about brains. You have to guess if they are the truth or just a myth. Answers on Page 8.

TRUTH OR MYTH?

1. Brain size does not determine intelligence.
2. The brain is the fattiest organ in the body.
3. Your brain is fully developed by the age of 18.
4. Some people can taste shapes and colors.
5. The spinal cord stops growing around age four or five.
6. Humans have the largest brains of all mammals.
7. You only use 10% of your brain.

Did you know that rhyme or rhythm to help remember something is one way you can "boost your memory power? Most of us learned to say the letters of the alphabet in order by using the alphabet song. This is called mnemonics. Another good example is using a phrase or word to remember a longer list. For example, HOMES helps us to remember the names of our five Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior. You can also create a picture in your mind to help remember a difficult word or phrase. Imagine a hippo attending summer camp, for example, is a mnemonic to help remember the word hippocampus.



DOG

A faithful dog will play with you

And laugh with you or cry...

He'll gladly starve to stay with you

Nor even reason why.

And when you're feeling out of sorts

Somehow he'll understand.

He'll watch you with his shining eyes

And try to lick your hand.

His blind, implicit faith in you

Is matched by his great love...

The kind that all of us should
have

In the Master, up above!



When everything is said and done

I guess this isn't odd,

For when you spell "dog" backwards

You will get the name of GOD!

*Submitted by COA member and resident of the
Rivers Residences, Claudia Jackson*



One of our Meals on Wheels recipients
enjoying an ice cream treat

In St. Joseph County, we are fortunate to have the support of our community through a millage that helps cover some of the costs of our Meals on Wheels program. We also have some fantastic community partners that have donated to our program with meals, shelf stable food and special treats.

L.A. Café in Three Rivers has donated 20 meals a week to Meals on Wheels clients since December and plans to continue through at least April of this year, thanks to the generosity of its customers.

UAW Local 2093 in Three Rivers drops off treats and toiletries and other wonderful gifts on a regular basis, just to brighten up the lives of our Meals on Wheels clients.

Before the pandemic hit, **Walther Farms** also was donating 50 bags each week filled with snacks and other shelf stable foods that were delivered one route every week, rotating through all the routes.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Three Rivers provides holiday gifts for Meals on Wheels recipients each year.



Staff preparing Valentine's Day
treats donated by UAW Local
2093 ready for our Meals on
Wheels drivers



Meals from L.A. Café in Three Rivers

TRUTH OR MYTH

Answers to our Brain Knowledge Quiz on Page 6

Brain size does not determine intelligence.

TRUTH - Surprisingly, Albert Einstein's brain weighed less than the average brain. His brain did show relatively dense connections between brain areas. Scientists attribute the connections between areas and their efficiency to intelligence more than size.

The brain is the fattiest organ in the body.

TRUTH - Overall the brain is 75-80% water. The other 20-25% of the brain is solid tissue and is a minimum of 60% fat.

Your brain is fully developed by the age of 18.

MYTH - Brain development continues well past adolescence and into adulthood. In particular, the prefrontal cortex, which is important for reasoning and decision-making, does not fully mature until we reach our mid-twenties.

Some people can taste shapes and colors.

TRUTH - The phenomenon, known as synesthesia, comes from a Greek word meaning to "perceive together." People with this ability may hear, smell, taste or feel pain in color. Others might taste shapes or experience colors or tactile sensations when in the presence of music.

The spinal cord stops growing around age four or five.

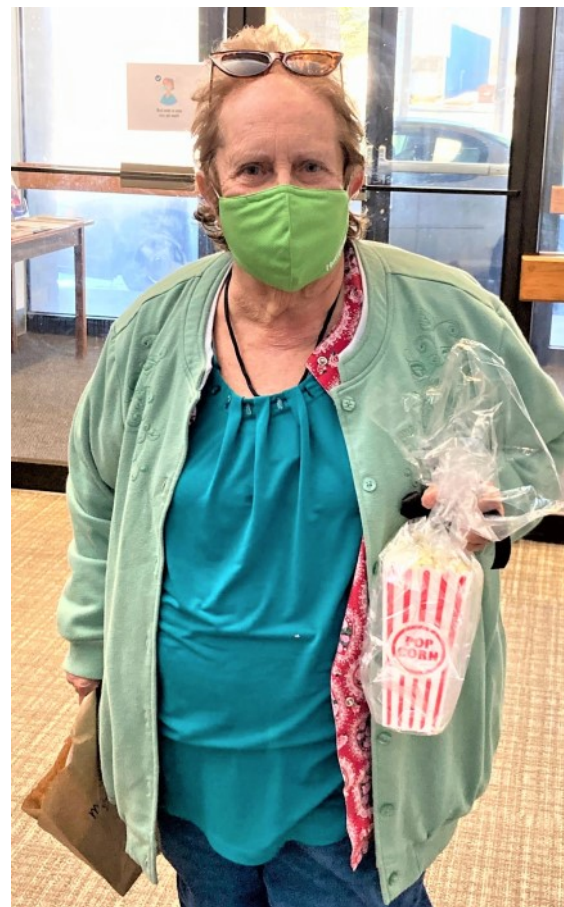
TRUTH - Your spinal cord is part of your central nervous system, along with your brain. Your spinal cord will grow approximately 16-20 inches in the first four to five years of your life and then it stops.

Humans have the largest brains of all mammals.

MYTH - Sperm whales hold the trophy for the largest brain of any living species! Although sperm whale brains are more than 5 times as large as human brains, humans still hold the record for the species with the largest brain relative to body size.

You only use 10% of your brain.

MYTH - The myth of 10% brain usage dates back almost a century. In 2013, 65% of Americans believed this myth. In reality, unless there is brain damage, most areas of the brain are active all the time to some degree. Even when you think you are not using your brain, such as during sleep, brain scans have revealed that widespread neural networks are active and working together.



We loved giving popcorn away to our older adults at the end of January.

There is nothing better than snuggling up on the couch when it's cold outside and watching a great movie or television series with a bowl of popcorn to snack on!

Muriel Bright of Three Rivers stopped by to pick up her craft kit and was pleasantly surprised with her little gift from the COA.

*Stay warm everyone!
Turn to Page 5 for a craft that will surely make you think Spring!*

COA Advisory Board News

The COA Advisory Board is meeting Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. It will be a Zoom meeting until further notice.

Any member of the public is welcome to attend COA Board meetings. Please call the COA to request an email invitation.

More information about the Advisory Board can be found on the COA website: www.sjccoa.com



The COA welcomed St. Joseph County Commissioner Kathy Pangle to the Board at its January meeting. Kathy represents District 2, which includes the townships of Burr Oak, Colon, Leonidas, Mendon and Park. She is passionate about ensuring older adults in our county are informed about what the COA does and all the resources it has to offer its citizens. Welcome Kathy!

COA ACTIVITIES

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SERVICES

Foot Doctor

Oaks Enrichment Center in Sturgis

Tuesday, April 13

9:30 am - Noon

Rivers Enrichment Center

Monday, March 1

(FULL - CALL TO GO ON WAITLIST)

Monday, May 3

9:00am - Noon

The 2021 schedule is available at our reception desks. We can also email you the 2021 schedule or mail it to you - just give us a call and let us know.



Shar Norman of Sturgis for donating beautiful wood for our crafts!

Diane Foote of Three Rivers for donating a Nordic Ski Machine for our fitness room

St. Peter's Evangelical Church in Three Rivers for a monetary gift to the COA

Other generous donations we have received for Meals on Wheels are on Page 7

SUPPORT

Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Group

In-person meetings are still on hold. If you need support, please call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Hotline (800.272.3900). Through this free service, specialists and master's level clinicians offer confidential support and information to people with the disease, caregivers, families and the public. You can contact the helpline day or night for information about local programs and services. You can also receive a confidential care consultation and receive help with decision-making support, crisis assistance and education on issues families face every day.



Kinship Care Support Group

A support group for grandparents and other relative caregivers raising grandchildren.

This group meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm. In-person meetings are cancelled until further notice. **The support group leader is going to have a virtual meeting on Thursday, March 18 at 6 p.m.** If you would like to participate, please give the group leader a call so he can email you an invitation. The contact person is Clark Fries and he can be reached at 269-858-5704.

EDUCATIONAL

Technology Help is Available at the COA - Give us a Call!

If you have any questions related to your computer or a mobile device, such as a smart phone or iPad, perhaps we can help! Whether you need help turning things on, navigating the Internet, sending photos, questions about your email, or questions about Facebook and other social media sites, we can try to assist you. Call 279-8083 to make an appointment.

Book Club

The Three Rivers Book Club is reading *And The Good News Is...Lessons and Advice From the Bright Side* by Dana Perino. That book will be discussed on Thursday, March 11 at Noon via Zoom.

Please call Ruth Mancina at 279-8083 or email her at rmancina@sjccoa.com for information on how you can participate.

Books are available at the COA reception desk in Three Rivers.

The Sturgis Book Club is reading *The Storyteller's Secret* by Sejal Badani. Please call the Sturgis Library at (269) 659-7224 and ask for Karen Good if you would like a copy of the book. The group is scheduled to meet on Zoom on March 18 at 3 p.m.

COA ACTIVITIES

VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES



We are offering all exercise classes on our Facebook page or via Zoom.

We also upload our classes to our YouTube channel.

If you need any help with Facebook, YouTube or Zoom, or

finding the COA on these platforms, please call us at 279-8083 and ask for Ruth or Amanda. This exercise schedule is subject to change. We are following the guidelines and orders coming from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Please visit the COA website at www.sjccoa.com or our Facebook for up-to-the-minute news.

We miss all of you!

PLEASE CALL TO USE OUR FITNESS ROOMS

Our Enrichment Centers in Three Rivers and Sturgis have fitness rooms that are available for individual use or up to 2-3 people from the same household. If you would like to use either one of our Fitness Rooms, please call the COA at 279-8083 to make a reservation.

Chair Yoga - Facebook

Mondays & Thursdays
(1pm - 1:45pm)
Instructor: Lynn Zeiler

Zumba Gold - Virtual via Zoom

Mondays & Thursdays
(2pm)
Instructor: Lynn Zeiler
Zumba Gold is offered through Zoom - email Lynn at coazumbagold@gmail.com and let her know you would like an invite.

Say YES! To Weights - Facebook

Three Rivers: Wednesdays
(9:30am)
Instructor: Cathy Taylor

Arthritis Exercise - Facebook

Take part in low impact exercise for those with arthritis or related conditions. Class designed to help mobility. Our instructor is AFEP Certified. (Evidence Based)

Tuesdays & Thursdays
(11am)
Instructor: Cathy Taylor

Meals on Wheels & To-Go Menu

MARCH 2021

DATE	HOME DELIVERED MENU ENTRÉE	TO-GO MENU
Monday, March 1	Cheese Tortellini with Marinara, Brussel Sprouts, Carrots	Roast Beef & Swiss Sliders, Potato Salad, Baked Beans
Tuesday, March 2	Meatballs & Mushroom Gravy, Rice, Zucchini	Chicken Salad Croissant, Broccoli Salad, Three Bean Salad
Wednesday, March 3	Western Style Omelet, Seasoned Potatoes, Peaches	Deviled Ham Sandwich, Tomato Salad, Coleslaw, Fruit
Thursday, March 4	Beef Strips & Gravy, Spinach, Four Seasons Vegetables	Antipasto Chopped Salad, Fruit, Muffin
Friday, March 5	Chicken with Rosemary Gravy, Lima Beans, Spring Veggies	Meatloaf Sandwich, German Potato Salad, Tossed Salad
Monday, March 8	Charbroiled Beef Patty, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Corn	Ham Croissant, Potato Salad, Kidney Bean & Pea Salad
Tuesday, March 9	Chicken Ala King, Cheesy Cauliflower, Brussel Sprouts	Chicken, Bacon & Ranch Salad, Muffin, Fruit
Wednesday, March 10	3-Cheese Ravioli & Spinach Alfredo, Mixed Veggies	Bruschetta Chicken Wrap, 3-Bean Salad, Creamy Cucumbers
Thursday, March 11	Pork with Pizzaiola Sauce, Asparagus, Carrots	Roast Beef & Cheddar Sliders, Potato Salad, Bean & Corn Salad
Friday, March 12	Breakfast Burrito with Salsa, Hash Browns, Applesauce	Caprese Turkey Salad, Roll, Mandarin Oranges
Monday, March 15	Waffles, Turkey Sausage Patty, Cubed Potatoes, Sliced Apples	Tuna Salad Sandwich, 3-Bean Salad, Marinated Vegetables
Tuesday, March 16	Southern Style Fish Over Rice & Veggies, Peas	Egg Salad Croissant, Carrot Raisin Salad, Cole Slaw, Fruit
Wednesday, March 17	Chicken & Dressing with Gravy, Spring Veggies	Chicken Caesar Salad, Muffin, Fruit
Thursday, March 18	Peppers & Beef Patty with Gravy, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes	Turkey & Swiss Sandwich, Loaded Potato Salad, Veggies & Dip
Friday, March 19	Pork & Zesty Orange Rice, Green Peas, Carrots	Chef Salad, Roll, Fruit
Monday, March 22	Fish Nuggets, Northern Beans, Broccoli Florets	Turkey & Cheddar Sandwich, Baked Beans, Potato Salad
Tuesday, March 23	Breaded Veal Parmesan, Green Pea Blend, Carrots	Veggie & Cream Cheese Turkey Bagel Sandwich, Veggies
Wednesday, March 24	Creamy Breaded Chicken, Lima Beans, Mixed Veggies	Cream Cheese Sliders, Black Bean & Corn Salad, Coleslaw
Thursday, March 25	Pork Riblet Patties with BBQ Sauce, Green Pea Blend	Tuna Salad Croissant, Ambrosia, Carrot Raisin Salad, Potato Salad
Friday, March 26	Creamy Country Fried Steak, Redskin Potatoes, Mixed Veggies	Chicken Ranch Wrap, Pea Salad, Marinated Veggies
Monday, March 29	Southwestern Style Chicken Tenders, Sweet Potatoes, Broccoli	Chicken Salad Sandwich, Coleslaw, 3-Bean Salad
Tuesday, March 30	Salisbury Steak, Redskin Potatoes, Mixed Veggies	Italian Sub, Potato Salad, Kidney Bean & Pea Salad
Wednesday, March 31	3-Layer Spinach Lasagna, Autumn Blend Veggies, Squash	Lettuce Bowl with Egg Salad, Black Bean & Corn Salad

Meals are served with side dishes and milk, to provide 1/3 the Recommended Daily Allowances for adults 60+

Call the COA 48 hours in advance to reserve your to-go lunch at Three Rivers or Sturgis.
 You can also make a reservation on our website at www.sjccoa.com
 Questions? Call Nutrition Manager Katie Hughes at 279-8083, Ext. 109



Rivers Enrichment Center
 269-279-8083
 1200 W. Broadway Street
 Three Rivers, MI 49093
 Lunch can be picked up
 between 11:30-12:30

Oaks Enrichment Center
 269-279-8083
 306 N. Franks Avenue
 Sturgis, MI 49091
 Lunch can be picked up
 between 11:30-12:30



Easter is on April 4. The COA is closed on Friday, April 2. Can you tell we're ready for Spring?



The Senior Connection
St. Joseph County Commission on Aging
1200 W. Broadway Street
Three Rivers, MI 49093

Address Label



Want *The Senior Connection* mailed to your home?

Please enclose this form with a check for \$8.00 and mail to:
COA
1200 W. Broadway Street
Three Rivers, MI 49093

Checks payable to: COA
*Include your full name and mailing address

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____