



Looking back to the 2015 Aster Senior Center at Red Mountain Holiday Party.

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DECEMBER MENU

Meals are ready for pick-up between 11:00 am - 12:00 pm. 480-962-5612 (Mesa Downtown) or 480-218-2221 (Red Mt).
Items with ** contain pork or pork products. Menu items subject to change due to availability.

MONDAY

Pick-Up Meals

- For age 60 and up
- Daily hot meals or frozen for a week
- RSVP required by 2:00 pm prior day

TUESDAY

- 1**
- Salmon w/ Rosemary and Garlic
 - Four-Way Vegetables
 - Cauliflower
 - Whole Grain Roll
 - Orange

WEDNESDAY

- 2**
- Chicken Cobbler
 - Fresh Baked Biscuit
 - Brussel Sprouts
 - Apricots

THURSDAY

- 3**
- Vegetable Lasagna
 - Asparagus
 - Belgian Vegetables
 - Breadstick
 - Banana

FRIDAY

- 4**
- Teriyaki Riblets**
 - Asian Blend Vegetables
 - Coleslaw
 - Pineapple
 - Graham Crackers

7

- Butternut Ravioli with Chicken
- Peas and Carrots
- Garden Salad
- Whole Grain Roll
- Fruited Gelatin

8

- Hamburger
- Lettuce and Tomato
- Sweet Potato Fries
- Apple Slices
- Birthday Cake

9

- Honey Glazed Ham**
- Green Bean Casserole
- Roasted Red Potatoes
- Whole Grain Roll
- Fresh Cantaloupe

10

- Deli Turkey Sandwich w/ Lettuce & Tomato
- Broccoli Salad
- Macaroni Vegetable Salad
- Grapes
- Cookie

11

- Fish Sticks
- Wax Beans
- Vegetable Blend
- Rice Pilaf
- Mixed Berries

14

- Polish Sausage with Kraut**
- Zucchini
- Five-Way Vegetables
- Whole Grain Bun
- Mango

15

- BBQ Chicken
- Carrots
- Spinach
- Whole Grain Roll
- Mandarin Oranges

16

- Tuna Casserole
- Roasted Tomatoes
- Sunset Vegetables
- Whole Grain Roll
- Fruit Cocktail

17

- Beef Baked Bolognese
- Caesar Salad
- Lima Beans
- Whole Grain Roll
- Diced Pears

18

- Rosemary Garlic Beef w/ Demi Glaze
- Roasted Potatoes
- Caramelized Carrots
- Yeast Sweet Roll
- Melon
- Apple Cobbler

21

- Roasted Turkey with Gravy
- Peas
- Chef's Vegetables
- Cornbread Stuffing
- Whole Grain Roll
- Tropical Fruit

22

- Beef Tips with Mushroom Gravy
- Broccoli
- Zucchini
- Brown Rice
- Orange

23

- Chicken Fajitas
- Peppers & Onions
- Pinto Beans
- Whole Wheat Tortilla
- Banana
- Apple Crisp

24

- Baked Tilapia
- Peas and Carrots
- Brussel Sprouts
- Whole Grain Roll
- Grapes

25

CLOSED TODAY



28

- Eggplant Parmesan
- Grilled Artichokes
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Whole Wheat Pasta
- Plums

29

- Corned Beef
- Steamed Cabbage
- Red Potatoes
- Rye Bread
- Apples

30

- Herb Roasted Chicken
- Spinach
- Baked Beans
- Birthday Cake
- Pineapple

31

- Scrambled Eggs
- Sausage Gravy**
- Cheddar Biscuit
- Rosemary Roasted Potatoes
- Cantaloupe
- Blueberry Crisp

ASTER AGING

45 West University Drive • Mesa, AZ 85201 • 480-964-9014



DRIVEN TO HELP

Eleven years ago, Ron moved to Arizona to be near his daughter. After being invited by a friend to enjoy an activity at one of our Senior Centers, he quickly became a regular himself. It wasn't long before he learned of the urgent need for Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers. Ron knew he could help. Eleven years later, he still is.



That drive to help is more important than ever. Demand due to the pandemic has doubled the number of individuals needing home-delivered meals. Ron alone delivers around 70 meals a day. While that gives him a short time with each person, he gets to know them as friends. "You get attached and can tell if there's a problem," Ron shares, adding that he is there when help is needed.

"Our volunteers are often the only contact with another person many of our participants have," says Reed Steigerwalt, Director of Meals on Wheels. "The time they spend with these individuals, the impact they have, can truly be life-saving."

Today, when he's not hiking or staying busy with friends, Ron volunteers his time five days a week. Why does he do it? As Ron simply states, "it isn't just delivering meals; it's a part of life - helping people. It's more than just delivering meals," he continues with a smile. "Part of the reward is being a friend."

If you or someone you know could benefit from home delivered meals, or if you would like to volunteer, please contact us today.



MEALS ON WHEELS

Carol Dopudja

480-964-9014 | cdopudja@asteraz.org

PROGRAMS FOR YOU

We support & empower East Valley older adults and their families to remain independent & engaged in our communities through:



CENTER-BASED SERVICES

Our Centers are currently closed for in-person activity, yet we are providing online activities & weekday Pick-Up & Go meals.



MEALS ON WHEELS

Providing nutritious meals and essential wellness checks, in both short- and long-term plans, to meet your unique needs.



IN-HOME SUPPORT

Supporting homebound adults with transportation, grocery shopping, well visits, respite, personal care, and housekeeping.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Help navigate & access critical services and health resources, as well as being the NCOA Benefits Enrollment Center for the East Valley.

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU

We love getting to know our program participants. To help continue this, we asked a few questions during our Pick Up N' Go lunches at the Centers.

What Was Your Favorite Toy When You Were Growing Up?

SUE THOMAS

"Long before Ken and Barbie, there were paper dolls and these were my favorite. I would cut them out and put different outfits on the dolls. My friends and I would also make a playhouse for ourselves. We'd use all sorts of material, including railroad ties, to make the house. Then we'd paint it."

Do You Have a Favorite Thanksgiving tradition?

MARK CLOSSER

"I go to Salvation Army to get a bird and my meal."

What is the Best Piece of Advice You've Ever Received?

MARJORIE BLANKLEY

"One day at a time."

If You Could Have Dinner with Anyone from History, Who Would it Be?

MARJORIE BLANKLEY

"Dinner with my mother."



HOLIDAY SELF-CARE

Excerpted from the National Council on Aging

The ongoing pandemic adds stress to the bustling holiday season. It is critical to practice self-care activities during this time to stay healthy. Consider the following steps for managing your own health during this time:



Daily Movement

Remember to keep moving. Back pain, muscle tension, weight management, blood pressure, blood sugar, and even your emotional health can improve with movement.

Healthy Eating

It is so easy to eat more often or less healthy foods during the holidays. However, eating healthy foods can be an important part of improving your health and strengthening your immune system.

Health Tracking

Think about ways you can monitor and record aspects of your health and bring this information to medical appointments. This will help your doctor understand your symptoms.

Staying Connected

Stay socially connected to family and friends, while maintaining physical distances. If you have people over, wear masks, make sure your place is well ventilated and wash your hands often.

For more, join us for this online class hosted by Empact.

Register at www.asteraz.org/news/calendar.html



December 17 | 10:00 am

FINDING JOY IN THE HOLIDAY SEASON

With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can find peace and joy during the holidays.

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A GIFT OF LOVE

We are living in very challenging times. COVID-19 has impacted every aspect of our lives, disrupting work, school, and family gatherings. The pandemic has also affected our programs, causing us to adapt, addressing health and safety concerns.

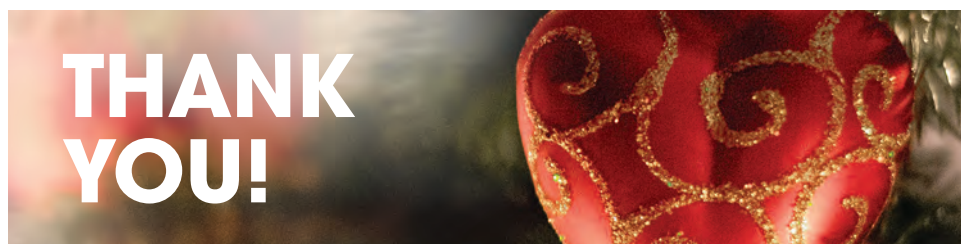
Yet, Aster remains here, every day, empowering and supporting older adults throughout the East Valley to remain independent and engaged in our communities. We can continue providing these critical programs due to our generous, dedicated donors.

Gifts to Aster help create a solid foundation of a good work in our neighborhoods -- the reliable community safety net. This past year, Aster helped over 5,500 local seniors remain healthy and independent through this continuum of support. Demand for Meals on Wheels alone doubled since the pandemic's onset!

Donations provide home delivered meals, in-person and virtual engagement activities, individualized social services, critical transportation, and more. What's more, we are a responsible steward of donors' dollars, proud that out of every dollar donated to Aster, 89 cents funds direct service provision.

When you give to Aster, you are strengthening our community, providing local seniors the gift of continued independence, and the gift of peace of mind to their loved ones. We are ensuring that no one needs to go through the journey of aging alone.

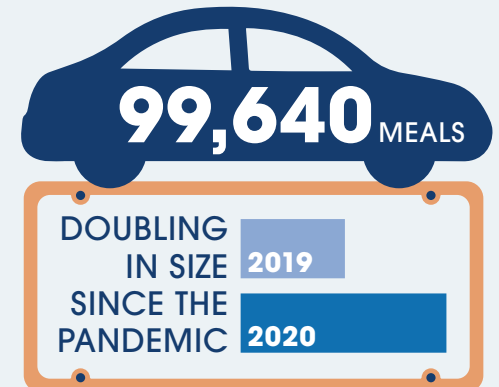
On behalf of all of those we serve, thank you. Thank you for caring about our community and for helping seniors we serve.



PROGRAMS AT WORK

Every day we are working to empower and support East Valley older adults and their families. In Fiscal Year 2020:

MEALS ON WHEELS DELIVERED



OUTREACH & SOCIAL SERVICES



For a full report, visit us online at www.asteraz.org/services

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MEET YOUR STAFF

Thelma Marston

Receptionist,
Senior Center at
Mesa Downtown



Birth Month

July

Birthplace

Ohio

Hobbies

Reading, making flower
arrangements and wreaths

Hidden Talent

Decorating and organization

Pets

None

Favorite Movies

Any Hallmark movie

Favorite TV Shows

I do not watch TV

Favorite Food

Comfort food

Personal Motto

Believe



VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

We are excited to offer interactive live classes through Zoom. Each class is **FREE** to attend, but does require pre-registration through our website. This month's classes includes:



Mondays | 10:00 - 11:00 am

MINDFULNESS AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

Facilitated by EMPACT

A weekly group that focuses on a peaceful daily routine.



Wednesdays | 10:30 - 11:30 am

DANCE FUSION

Facilitated by a Michelle Dionisio

Jazz, Pop, and R&B rhythms to basic dance movements.



December 3 & 17 | 1:00 - 2:30 pm

(lines open at 1:00, calling starts at 1:30)

PHONE BINGO

Play your favorite game and win prizes! Registration is required.



December 11 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

VETERANS' RESOURCES

Facilitated by the AZ Dept of Veterans Services

Providing information for service members and their families.



December 22 | 2:00 pm

HOLIDAY CONCERT

Featuring the East Valley Yamaha Music School

Join us via Zoom and enjoy some wonderful holiday tunes.



December 31 | 1:30 - 2:30 pm

(lines open at 1:00, trivia starts at 1:30)

NEW YEAR'S EVE TRIVIA

Test your knowledge as we say goodbye to 2020!

For the latest information about online classes, including new sessions and to register, visit our online calendar.

www.asteraz.org/news/calendar.html

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IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

We are very excited to announce the first in-person activities at our Senior Centers! Each activity is **FREE** to attend, but does require pre-registration and has **limited capacity**. All activities take place outdoors, require face masks to be worn during the event, with all attendees' temperatures checked on-site. This month's events:



Tuesday, Thursday, Fridays | 8:15 - 9:00 am
Beginning December 8 (no class on Christmas Day)
MORNING MOVEMENT

Red Mountain Senior Center - Back Patio

Get your day moving in the right direction with outdoor exercise!



December 15 | 10:00 - 11:00 am
ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Mesa Downtown Senior Center - Parking Lot

Celebrate the most wonderful time of year at Mesa Downtown with food, music and fun activities! RSVP by December 11.



December 18 | 10:00 - 11:00 am
ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Red Mountain Senior Center - Parking Lot

Celebrate the most wonderful time of year at Red Mountain with food, music and fun activities! RSVP by December 16.

For the latest information about in-person activities, including any new sessions and to register for these, visit our online calendar.

www.asteraz.org/news/calendar.html



HERE FOR YOU

**Mesa Downtown
Senior Center**

247 North Macdonald St
480-962-5612 p
cchavez@asteraz.org

**Red Mountain
Senior Center**

7550 East Adobe St
480-218-2221 p
lfort@asteraz.org

MEET YOUR STAFF

**Evea Lea
Barnes**

Receptionist,
Senior Center at
Red Mountain



Birth Month

January

Birthplace

Hurley, MO

Hobbies

Sewing and working puzzles

Hidden Talent

Playing piano

Pets

Gizz (a Chug,
aka Chihuahua-pug mix)

Favorite Movie

"It's a Wonderful Life"

Favorite TV Show

Home-improvement shows

Favorite Food

ICE CREAM!

Personal Motto

Smile and be thankful.

Fun Fact

I have had four name tags since 2001: Mesa Senior Center, East Valley Senior Center, East Valley Adult Resources, and Aster.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

Kwanzaa (“first fruits” in Swahili) is a celebration of family, culture, and community, beginning Dec 26 and lasting for seven days.

Kwanzaa is built around seven principles, known as Nguzo Saba:

Umoja encourages the coming together of family & community.

Kujichagulia encourages us to define and speak for ourselves.

Ujima reminds us to participate in the community & society.

Ujamaa encourages us to mutually meet common needs.

Nia encourages us to look within to set personal goals that are beneficial to others.

Kuumba, encourages the use of our creative energies to build a strong family and community.

Imani focuses on honoring our traditions and helps us strive for a higher level of life for humankind.

Near the end of the holiday, the community gathers for a feast called karamu, honoring ancestors, the past year, commitments for the new, with music, and dancing.



EIGHT-DAY MIRACLE

Excerpted from Activity Connections

The festival of Hanukkah, meaning “dedication,” lasts eight days to commemorate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after the defeat of the Syrian-Greeks in 165 BC. As they prepared to rededicate their defiled Temple, the Jews found only enough pure oil to light the Eternal Light for one day. The oil miraculously lasted for eight days, allowing time for more olive oil to be pressed and purified for use.



Today, Jewish people throughout the world celebrate Hanukkah by lighting a hanukkiyah—starting with one light and adding another each night until all eight are burning. The ninth branch is for the shamash (shah-MOSH), or servant flame that is used to light the others. And while the design and material may vary, the receptacles for the eight lights form a straight row so anyone can see at a glance which night of Hanukkah is being celebrated.

Like all Jewish holidays, Hanukkah is a festival celebrated with family, friends, and lots of food -- particularly those fried in oil -- reminiscent of the miracle. Potato pancakes or latkes are a traditional dish made of grated potatoes, onion, egg, a little flour and seasoning. Yeast doughnuts, called sofганиyot, are filled with fruit jam or jelly and deep fried in oil.

And, of course, gifts are part of Hanukkah. In the United States and Canada, most likely because of its proximity to Christmas, Hanukkah has become a lavish, eight-day, gift-giving holiday. Many modern-day Jews are trying to counter this trend and instead fill Hanukkah with family gatherings that emphasize caring and acts of charity.

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'TIS THE SEASON...

Excerpted from History.com

For two millennia, people around the world have been observing Christmas. However, it wasn't until the 1800's that Americans began to embrace the holiday. In doing so, they re-invented it, changing it from a raucous carnival holiday into a family-centered day of peace. But what piqued this interest?



The early 19th century was a period of class conflict and turmoil, with high unemployment and rioting during the season. In 1819, Washington Irving wrote 'The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.', a series of stories about the celebration of Christmas in an English manor. It featured a squire who invited the peasants into his home for the holiday, where the two groups mingled effortlessly. Irving thought Christmas should be a peaceful, warm-hearted holiday bringing groups together across lines of wealth or social status.

Also around this time, Charles Dickens created the classic holiday tale, 'A Christmas Carol'. The story's message – the importance of charity and good will towards all humankind – struck a powerful chord in the United States.

As Americans began to embrace Christmas as a perfect family holiday, old customs were unearthed. People looked toward recent immigrants and religions to see how the day should be celebrated. In the next 100 years, Americans built a Christmas tradition all their own that included pieces of many other customs, including decorating trees, sending holiday cards and gift-giving.

Although most families quickly bought into the idea that they were celebrating Christmas how it had been done for centuries, they had really re-invented a holiday to fill the cultural needs of a growing nation.

REEL TALK

A few recommendations of new films on streaming this month.



Mank

2020 | R | Dec 4
streams on Netflix

Gary Oldman
Lily Collins

David Fincher's film of screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz's and the development of 'Citizen Kane'.



Soul

2020 | PG | Dec 25
streams on Disney Plus

Jamie Foxx
Tina Fey

A musician who has lost his passion is transported out of his body and must find his way back with the help of a new soul.

Amazon Prime

I'm Your Women (Dec 11)
Sound of Metal (Dec 4)
Sylvie's Love (Dec 25)

Disney Plus

Godmothered (Dec 4)
Miraculous World: New York (Dec 18)
Safety (Dec 11)

Netflix

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (Dec 18)
The Midnight Sky (Dec 23)
The Prom (Dec 11)

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SUBARU LOVES ASTER

Over the past 12 years, Subaru and its retailers have helped Meals on Wheels to deliver more than 2.3 million meals to seniors in need nationwide through their Subaru Share the Love Event.

For the entire month of December, through Jan 4, 2021, for every new Subaru vehicle purchased or leased, Subaru will donate \$250 to the customer's choice of participating charities -- including Meals on Wheels! As a Meals on Wheels agency, Aster will receive a share of these donations from Subaru vehicles sold at participating retailers.

So, if you are in the market for a car, please consider a Subaru. You get a nice new Subaru car while supporting seniors across our community!



TRAVELING SAFELY

Excerpted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Many of us are considering travel to visit family this holiday season. The CDC reminds us that staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.



However, if you do travel, try to travel by car and take steps to protect yourself and others:

- Wear a mask, covering your nose and mouth, when in public.
- Stay at least 6 feet apart (about 2 arms' length) from anyone who is not from your traveling party.
- Wash your hands with soap (or use hand sanitizer) after being in a public place, such as a bathroom.
- When getting gas, use disinfecting wipes on handles and buttons at the gas pumps before you touch them.
- Plan ahead and pack your own food and water. If you cannot, be sure to use drive-thrus.

Remember, even if you take every precaution, you can still contract COVID-19. If you believe you have been exposed, immediately seek out a local testing center at your destination.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

from your friends at  **aster**

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COOKIE PUZZLES

Match the country of origin with the name of each cookie shown.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| _____ Belgium | _____ Greece | _____ Norway |
| _____ Denmark | _____ Hungary | _____ Poland |
| _____ Finland | _____ Italy | _____ Scotland |
| _____ France | _____ Mexico | _____ Spain |

1. Chrusciki



2. Madeleines



3. Piparkakut



4. Mushkazone



5. Shortbread



6. Melomakarona



7. Lukken



8. Pizzelles



9. Fattigmann



10. Vanillekranse



11. Suspiros



12. Bizcochos



Find the two cookies that are exactly alike.

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



Belgium (7); Denmark (10); Finland (3); France (2); Greece (6); Hungary (4)
Italy (8); Mexico (12); Norway (9); Poland (11); Scotland (5); Spain (11)

2 & 8

ANSWER

ANSWER



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HOW YOU CAN HELP

In times like these, Meals on Wheels' service is more important than ever. Our staff and volunteers provide nutritious meals and critical well visits to seniors across our community. You can ensure the continued delivery of this critical service through a donation. Any amount helps seniors stay safe and healthy!



DONATE ONLINE TODAY

www.asteraz.org/help/donate.html