THE THRIVE CHRONICLES

Serving the Thrive Community in Virtual Reality
Volume 1 • Issue 4 November 2026

The Editor's Corner

by The Three Thriveateers, co-editors Pat Parker • Ellen Steele • Vanessa Homedew

November is a time for giving thanks, and here at Thrive Pavilion, we have so much to be thankful for! This month, we're celebrating the creativity, friendship, and generosity that make our community so special. From our talented Thrive Players and dedicated volunteers to the members who share their stories, talents, and knowledge, everyone contributes something unique.

As we approach Thanksgiving, we're especially grateful for the friendships we've made, the laughter we've shared, and the wonderful people who make Thrive feel like home.

Whether you're celebrating with family, friends, or your Thrive community, we wish you a warm and happy Thanksgiving.

Happy Thanksgiving from your Three Thriveateers!

In This Issue

💚 Community Spotlight
🍽️ Pat's Nutrition Corner
🎬 A Word from the Board
🧭 Ellen's Meanderings
⭐ Volunteer Spotlight
❤️ Health & Wellness
📅 Upcoming Events
🎨 Creative Corner
🌟 With Gratitude
💡 Spotlight Event
🦴 Funny Bone
📡 Dew's News
💻 Tech Tips

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet Susan Harris

SusyNerdess • Real VR Fishing host

From the editors

For more than two years, Susan has faithfully hosted VR fishing events without missing a single one. Along the way, she has taught many members to fish, welcomed new friends, and strengthened the bonds within our community. Thank you, Susan, for your patience, dedication, and all you do for Thrive!

Hello Thrivers

I am Susan Harris, aka SusyNerdess (formerly Susy.699378). At Christmas time 2023 I saw an ad for the new Meta Quest 3. It looked interesting and fun, but no one I knew had one. There was no place to see one in action, but Costco had them. So, I purchased my first headset and figured that I could return it if it was not for me. Well, it was for me! I had no idea what to do or where to go but I worked my way through the tutorials and tried a few apps. Within 4 days of getting my headset I found Thrive Pavilon in the Facebook groups. I joined and found my way to the Meta World home of Thrive Pavilion.

Hooked on fishing

I came to the new member meetup and showed up for different activities. I was world hopping with a couple of other Thrivers when they decided to go to Real VR Fishing. I said, “Fishing, boring.” They told me it was fun, the app was only $20, buy it and meet them in the app. They told me how to join a multi-player room and how to find them. I had no clue what I was doing, but when I finely got a little fish on my line and pulled it in the was “hooked.” Even though my early fishing friends were not on line all the time I kept trying to catch those fish. Soon I found I was thoroughly hooked!

Continued on the next page →

Volunteer Spotlight

Susan’s story

Continued from the previous page

Becoming a volunteer

When at Thrive one day I spoke to Rob (our Founder) and inquired about having RVR Fishing meetups like we do for Walkabout Minigolf and other activities. He suggested that I host the meetups and that was how I was drafted. What’s the old army saying? Never Volunteer. Uppps....

The story behind SusyNerdess

Who am I and how did I end up in VR: Well I definitely had no formal computer background but out of necessity I became the webmaster for my husband and I’s small business when in 1995 I was told to get us on the web. Originally, I labelled myself Susy the Aspiring Computer Nerdess, but after a few years my friends told me I wasn’t just Aspiring, I was a real Nerdess!

I met my husband in 1982 when he had a start up manufacturing business that eventually became my business too. 21st Century Scientific, on the web at wheelchairs.com is still in business today, though we are retired, the business continues to manufacture custom power wheelchairs under the brand name Bounder Power wheelchairs. My husband was the brains being a electronic engineer and computer programmer too. I did marketing, bookkeeping, graphics, website, purchasing and anything else that needed to be done. In short, I was an excellent #2.

Finding connection through VR

By 2023 I had placed my husband into assisted living/memory care. I was trying to find my way alone for the first time in my life with a large home, just me and my 2 dogs, a husband with no brains and all the time to do – well – that was the question. Thrive Pavilion filled a large hole in my life. VR allowed me to socialize, do many different things and see wonderful places yet still be at home and be available to advocate and care for my husband and deal with all the related finances.

At Thrive and in RVR Fishing I have met many people with many stories, but we all share something important: a connection that would never have happened without the “magic” of VR.

🎬 A Word from the Board

- **Getting to Know Our Newest Board Member**

Rebecca Knapp (pianofingers)

I'm excited to introduce myself as the newest board member at Thrive Pavilion. I look forward to serving alongside other boardmembers, coordinators, volunteers and Thrive members. I joined Thrive in 2024. I quickly started attending events for social interaction. Over time, I found a sense of purpose as I became more involved. I started helping with the game events, then became a coordinator for Walkabout Wednesdays. Shortly after, my husband and I started hosting poker nights. Through various events, I have met and become friends with many of you and found a sense of community unlike anywhere else.
I have been married to the love of my life for 29 years. We have 2 children and 1 granddaughter. My career background started in real estate and moved into an administrative assistant position; however, my proudest accomplishments are in raising my children. In 2001, I was diagnosed with a rare form of neuropathy. I chose to get involved and raise awareness. For 7 years, I led the Ohio and West Virginia branches of a non-profit organization, CMTA. Additionally, I helped edit the monthly magazine. I have also served on the board of a large local co-op while we homeschooled for 13 years. In addition to Thrive, I enjoy cooking, gardening, scrapbooking and piano.

My desire as a board member is to make a difference and utilize my skills for Thrive as it continues to grow, alleviating isolation and providing support and community for its members. I anticipate seeing you all in various events and getting to know you more.

🎨 Creative Corner

Celebrating the Creativity of Our Community

Panama City Sunset

Hi, my name is Trey and I go by TreyFern513 in Meta and VRChat! I am known for being the (Un)official mascot of Thrive and as the youngest person in Thrive!
I joined the group way back when it was, for the most part, based solely in Meta Horizon Worlds!
I am also host of Thrive's monthly Spoken Word event! My main hobby I like to focus on is photography! I take pictures of basically anything! Beautiful sunrises and sunsets, animals, nature, food, and so much more! I also love spoken word! Spoken word is a way for me to express my feelings and take the weight off my chest! I love being in thrive because I love interacting with people and making new friends! I'm going to attach a small poem I wrote that I hope you all will like:

See poem on next page.

Trey Fern (TreyFern519)

Continued from Creative Corner

Thrive: More Than a World

Step into Thrive, where friendships ignite,
Different worlds, different people, all shining bright.
We gather together, we laugh, and we grow,
Creating memories everywhere we go.

At the spoken word, we let our voices soar,
Sharing our stories, opening every door.
In the Gallery, creativity comes alive,
Through every picture, we watch art thrive.

Fun and Games bring laughter and friendly competition,
While world hops take us on adventures beyond imagination.
We meet, we explore, we connect as one,
Turning ordinary moments into extraordinary fun.

Thrive is more than a place we go—
It's a community where everybody belongs,
And together, we grow!

Trey Fern

Monthly & Daily Observances In November

by Dews

- **Men's Health Awareness Month**
- **National Diabetes Month**
- **National Adoption Month**
- **World Kindness Day: November 13th** (Be Kind)
- **World Diabetes Day: November 14th**

Community Spotlight

THRIVE PLAYERS: THE SHOW GOES ON!

With its October 25 and 26 performances of Whodunnit (Reprise), Thrive Players delivered another successful, well-done production—full of imagination, teamwork, and the special magic of live theater in virtual reality.

It All Began With an Invitation

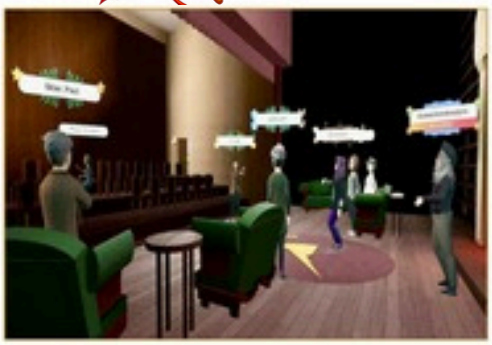
Linda Fisher made her directorial debut at Thrive Pavilion with a simple invitation: "Let's put on a show!" To her great surprise, a magnificent group of Thrive Players stepped forward to help make that magic happen in VR.

Linda, known in-world as LinFishr, continues to serve as the group's producer and director, bringing together performers, designers, and builders for each production.

Linda Fisher (LinFishr)
producer and director

50-Line Hamlet • 2024
Linda Fisher (LinFishr) at left

The Case of the Careless Victim
2025



The Detective Club Murder
2024

A Growing Tradition

The first production, Whodunnit (2023), launched a remarkable tradition. Since then, the group has presented 50-Line Hamlet, The Detective Club Murder, A Christmas Carol, The Case of the Careless Victim, and Ellery Queen's Circus Train—each with a different world, cast, and story to tell.

Community Spotlight

The People Behind the Curtain

Many actors have appeared in several productions, and some have been part of every show. Behind the scenes, a dedicated crew of world builders creates extraordinary virtual sets and theaters—including the Draconian Theatre, home to the group's first revolving stage.

Playbills have become part of the tradition, recognizing the many people whose imagination and volunteer work make each performance possible.

Whodunnit • 2023

The Detective Club Murder • 2024

A Christmas Carol • 2024

A Thrive Players scene

Ellery Queen's Circus Train • 2026

More Than a Performance

From first rehearsal to final bow, Thrive Players is a celebration of friendship, creativity, and what a community can accomplish together. Bravo to Linda Fisher and to every actor, world builder, technician, and volunteer who helps bring these stories to life!

by Pat Parker

Whodunnit (Reprise) • 2026

Ellen's Meanderings

Preparing for Winter and the Years Ahead

By Ellen Steele

A CONTINUING SERIES · NOVEMBER 2026

Getting ready for winter

Winter will shortly be upon us. Here in New York state, the leaves are on the ground, and most people are preparing for the first substantial snowfall. We have dug out our boots, hats, coats and gloves, scarves and snow shovels. Pantries are getting well stocked. For me, that's about all I need to do now. My husband takes care of the rest: winterizing the camper, storing the cars for the winter, putting on snow tires, and stacking a few tons of wood pellets in the basement. And for some of you, it means, "Yay, it's below 80!"

Learning to prepare for the winter rather than trying to fight it is the way to go. It took me a while to learn that. I was always one of those people racing to get my snow tires on after the first snowfall or trying to buy a shovel and ice scrapers at the end of December. Nowadays, I think I know AAA's winter car care checklist by heart, and I wouldn't dream of taking a road trip in the winter without a box of emergency supplies.

Making home a safer place

Last month, we began a discussion about aging in place and steps to do so safely and for as long as possible. AARP has a free HomeFit worksheet and checklist that allows you to go room by room and do an assessment to determine steps to make your home safer, as well as videos loaded with suggestions that are quite helpful.

Knowing when to ask for help

It's good to figure out what changes you can make yourself and what you may need a professional to do. Contact your local agency on aging to find out if they offer any services that provide a home assessment for you if you are not comfortable doing one yourself. They could provide an objective eye on some things we would not notice ourselves. Some steps may seem silly or unnecessary, but having a baseline and then thinking about what steps are a good fit for your household and situation is a great start.

Help with everyday upkeep

AARP also offers a free home maintenance guide that goes over basic things we need to do as the seasons change and for regular maintenance. While these, too, seem like basic tasks, the guide can be a tremendous aid if you have health issues or suddenly find yourself responsible for tasks that someone else has always handled. Besides AARP and the National Council on Aging, Homemods.org has several resources and helpful guides.

Choosing what works for you

Can You Afford to Age in Place? — NCOA

This is an excellent resource with questions and important information to help guide us as we decide what is best for each of us. It takes into consideration individual needs and lifestyles. Senior housing takes on many forms: it could be a smaller apartment with someone who does all the maintenance and outside upkeep; senior apartments where meals and community are close by; a tiny house on a son or daughter's property; or city living where public transportation and resources are just a phone call away.

Whatever path we choose, preparing now and having a plan can help us face the years ahead with greater confidence, security, and peace of mind.

https://www.ncoa.org/article/can-you-afford-to-age-in-place

Helpful resources

aarp.org — AARP
Homemods.org — Home modifications information
ncoa.org — National Council on Aging
AAA.com — American Automobile Association

THRIVE COMMUNITY • FEATURED EVENT

REAL VR FISHING SPOTLIGHT

An amazing catch in VR Fishing!

Dive Into a New Kind of Adventure

Realistic Locations • Amazing Fish • Endless Fun

By Trey Fern

Exploring the virtual aquarium with amazing fish!

Easy to get started, challenging to master. This is an app that can be played alone or with a small group of people (max 4). You can invite only your friends or drop into open multiplayer rooms. You find yourself in realistic places around the world. The fishes are fascinating and you will find yourself learning about all sorts of fish even if you have never fished before in your life. You can play as much or as little as you like, it is always an adventure.

I try to encourage new players to prepare by taking the tutorials and try the app alone before joining a meetup so that they have fun in a social meetup. I am available for classes or private coaching. The app has some fun Journeys that must be done alone and will also build skills and experience. I encourage those that want a multiplayer app that is relaxing and fun, to join me in VR Fishing.

Susan Harris, aka SusyNerdess

THRIVE VR FISHING MEETUP

Every other Monday • 8:00 PM Eastern

Meet in Thrive Home, then head to VRChat!

Pat's Nutrition Corner

PRACTICAL FOOD FOR HEALTHY AGING

AI at the Table:
Helping Seniors Eat Better

By Pat Parker, Retired Dietitian

Many seniors find that deciding what to cook can be one of the hardest parts of healthy eating. It can be tiring to plan meals, make grocery lists, and come up with new ideas – especially when cooking for one or two people. Today, artificial intelligence (AI) can be a helpful kitchen companion, making meal planning easier, more enjoyable, and better suited to your personal health needs.

A New Kind of Kitchen Helper

AI tools like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, or other AI assistants can quickly suggest meal ideas, create grocery lists, and offer tips based on your preferences. You can tell AI what foods you like, how much time you have, and any nutrition goals you want to reach. It's like having a friendly helper who never runs out of ideas.

What AI Can Do

AI can help you build a weekly meal plan, create a grocery list, suggest recipes, and give ideas for using up leftovers. It can tailor suggestions for higher-protein meals, more fiber, lower-sodium options, heart-healthy eating, or meals for one or two people. It can also suggest healthier swaps for favorite recipes and offer new ways to prepare familiar foods. If you're hoping to lose weight, AI can suggest balanced meals, reasonable portion ideas, and satisfying snacks that fit your goals.

Good Uses for AI

- Create weekly meal plans
- Make grocery lists
- Suggest recipe ideas
- Offer healthier food swaps
- Give ideas for using up leftovers

Helpful Questions to Ask

The more specific you are, the more useful the answers. You can ask for meal plans, recipes, grocery lists, or ideas that fit your health needs and taste preferences. Let AI know if you want simple recipes, quick meals, or options for one or two people. You can also ask for higher-protein meals, more fiber, lower-sodium choices, or heart-healthy recipes.

A Word of Caution

AI can be a wonderful tool, but it is not a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have diabetes, kidney disease, swallowing problems, food allergies, or other medical conditions, check with your doctor or a registered dietitian before making major changes to your diet. AI offers general information and may not always understand your specific health needs.

Used wisely, AI can take the guesswork out of meals, reduce stress, and help you enjoy nutritious, delicious food – one meal at a time.

Try asking AI:

- "Plan three easy, high-protein dinners for one."
- "Make a low-sodium grocery list for this week."
- "What can I make with chicken, spinach, eggs and yogurt?"
- "Suggest balanced meals for gentle weight loss."

Health & Wellness

Dangers of Microplastics

By Paul Massey

Whether we know it or like it, our bodies are polluted by tiny fragments of plastic that fail to break down in our environment. What does that mean for our long-term health, and what can we do about it?

What Are Microplastics?

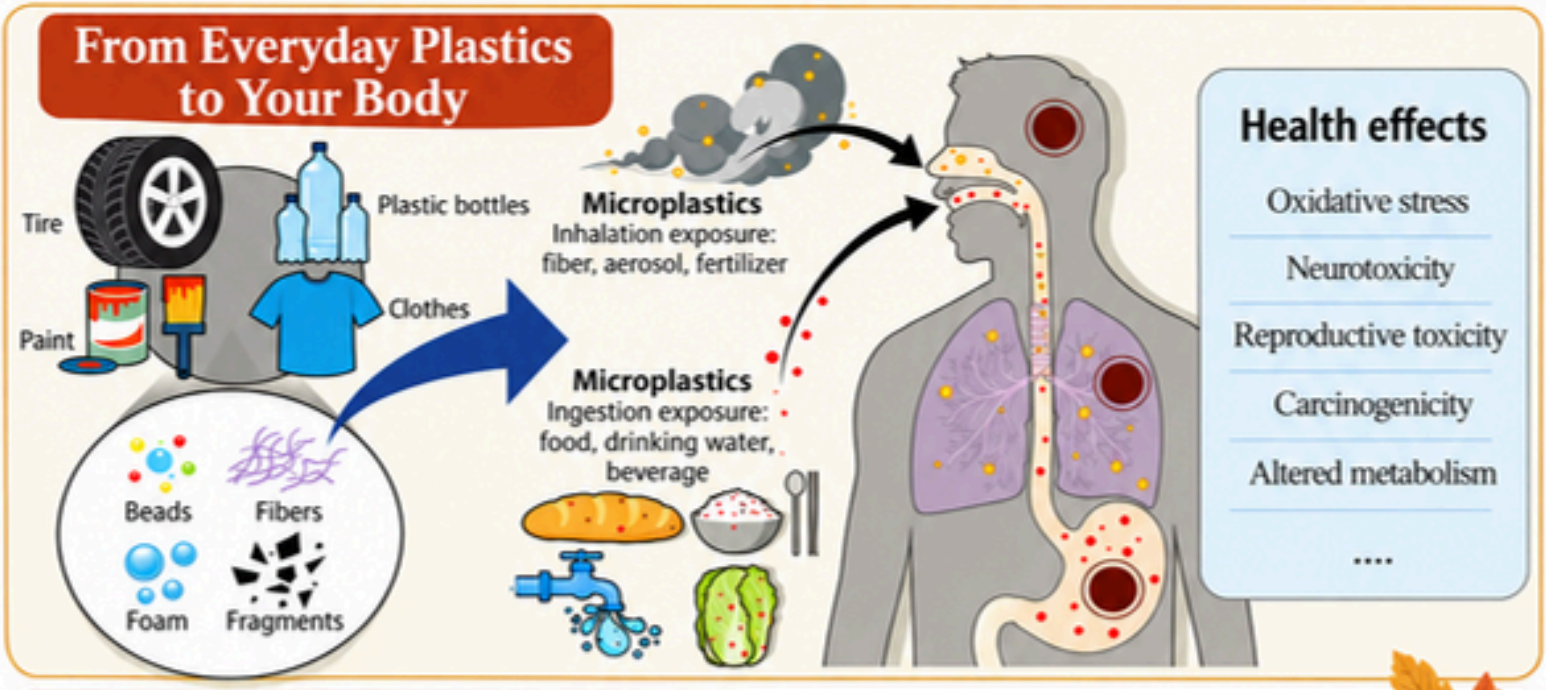
Microplastics are tiny plastic particles up to 5 millimetres in size, mostly formed as larger plastic objects break down into progressively smaller fragments, while others are deliberately added to products such as paints, cleansers, and toothpastes. They contaminate water, food, air, and clothing, occur throughout ecosystems from coral reefs to Antarctic ice, and enter our bodies through ingestion and inhalation, with particles detected in tissues including the brain and reproductive organs.

How We Absorb Microplastics

One of the worst methods of microplastic ingestion is leaving a plastic water bottle in the car, where it gets heated by the sun, thus releasing huge amounts of microplastics. Another major source of exposure is heating food in the microwave in plastic containers. Any hot food touching plastic may absorb microplastics from the container. Synthetic clothing, carpets, and upholstery shed fibres that can be inhaled or settle onto food and hands.

Health Effects of Microplastic Exposure

Microplastics can cause harmful biological effects in laboratory studies, but researchers have not yet established which diseases are caused by swallowing the amounts normally found in food and water. Human studies show concerning associations; they generally cannot separate ingestion from inhalation or prove that plastic particles caused the illness. Anecdotal evidence associates inflammation, cell damage, and intestinal damage, as well as reproductive problems and cancer, with microplastic exposure.



How to Avoid Microplastics

1. **Don't microwave food in plastic:** It can release millions of microplastic particles into the food.
2. **Use glass, metal, or ceramic with food:** This keeps plastic out of what you eat and drink.
3. When brewed, tea bags can release billions of microplastics. Switching to loose-leaf tea can help reduce microplastic exposure.
4. **Choose tap water and refillable metal bottles:** Tap water (filtered if needed) usually has far less plastic than bottled water.
5. **Go natural where it matters most:** Cotton sheets, wooden utensils, and stainless-steel cookware reduce daily exposure.
6. **Limit ultra-processed and fast foods:** Eating more fresh foods reduces exposure to food packaging chemicals.
7. **Cut back on indoor dust** by using a HEPA air filter.

For More Information:
https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC13351226/

Technology for Peace of Mind

By Ellen Marie Steele

Keeping our cell phones close by or on our person is a great comfort, knowing we can reach out to emergency services. But many of our modern devices have safety features that are helpful in our everyday lives.

The Apple Watch has fall detection and will automatically reach out for help when we can't. Wearable devices are now available that provide useful health information, such as how well we sleep, whether we are breathing well throughout the night, and whether we are getting enough movement during the day.

Blood sugar monitors are a tremendous help for diabetics, allowing them to see their numbers at a glance or sounding an alarm when those numbers drop during the night.

These applications are quite a comfort as we age.

Here are a couple of apps that are made specifically for seniors who live alone or spend time traveling and adventuring alone. Solowise and Snug Safety provide daily check-in services with reminders and will contact a designated person if you haven't checked in by the set time.

Both have free and paid services and are worth taking a look at if you live or travel independently.

Helpful Safety Tech at a Glance

Emergency Calling
Keep your cell phone close by or on your person so you can quickly reach emergency services.

Fall Detection
The Apple Watch can detect a fall and automatically reach out for help when you can't.

Sleep and Movement Tracking
Wearable devices can provide useful information about how well you sleep, whether you are breathing well, and if you are getting enough movement during the day.

Blood Sugar Alerts
Blood sugar monitors help diabetics see their numbers at a glance or sound an alarm when those numbers drop during the night.

Daily Check-In Apps
Apps like Solowise and Snug Safety provide daily check-in services with reminders and will contact a designated person if you haven't checked in by the set time.

Apps to Explore

Solowise
Provides daily check-in services with reminders.

Snug Safety
Provides daily check-in services with reminders.

Both have free and paid services and are worth taking a look at if you live or travel independently.

📅 Upcoming Events

October sure flew by! Must have been helped along by all those brooms we were flying on.🧹

The disco event last month was well received and had lots of positive feedback, and I guess there was a bit of excitement in the parking lot afterward.

We have a new story circle event that will give members a place to share stories they have written, improve their public speaking, and get feedback from their peers. Topics and prompts will be provided for writing and speeches.

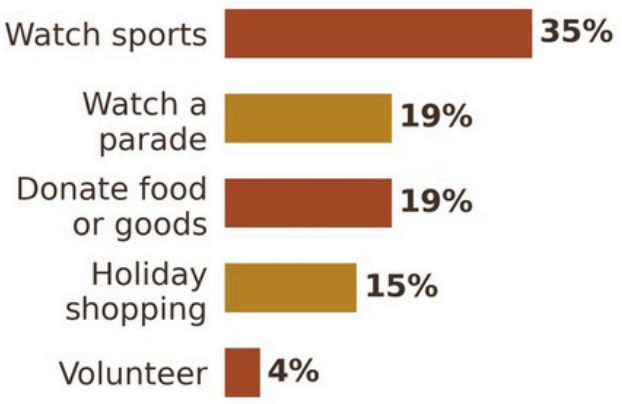
There is also an open-mic stand-up comedy pop-up in the works. So, if you are interested in trying that out, contact Pianofingers for details.🎙️

Anime night may be making a comeback as early as this fall for all you fans. Hope to see you around the Pavilion!😺

Ellen Marie Steele

Beyond the Feast

Thanksgiving plans among U.S. adults



Very or extremely likely to do each activity.
Source: Pew Research Center, Nov. 12-17, 2024.
9,609 adults surveyed. Multiple activities allowed.

Dews News:
Notes From The Gallery

The Theme For This Month Is

Fall Colors

Our Featured Artist Is

Renee (Windmajik)

The Theme For December Is

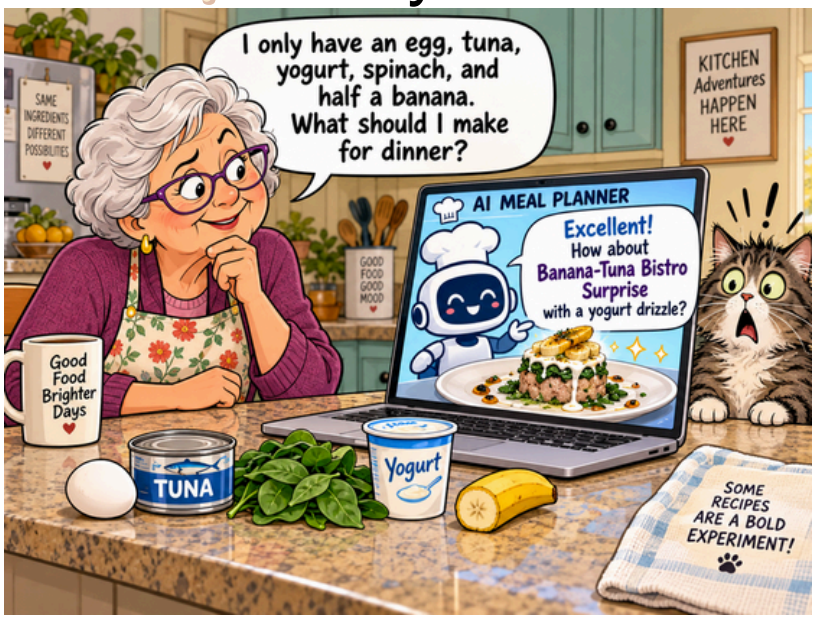
Winter Celebrations

Since Its Opening The Gallery Has Displayed Over 800 Pictures 😀

Did You Know?

"Lunch Atop A Skyscraper" is a 1932 photo of 11 ironworkers sitting on a steel beam 850 feet above the ground. Despite looking completely exposed to the open air, a finished floor sat just a few feet below them.

Funny Bone



WITH GRATITUDE

Honoring Our 2026 Contributors

Thrive Pavilion extends its heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has contributed so generously this year. Every contribution makes a meaningful difference.

Lisa Ackerson
Michele Allegro
Julie Rizor Chaney
Patricia Delafuente
Jennie Fisher
Linda Fisher
Jody Goran
Jeromy and Rebecca Knapp
Steven Leibo
Paul Massey
Pat Ferguson Parker
Jane Reid
Myra Schenkel
Ronda Sims
Ellen Marie Steele
Amy Temperly

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED THROUGH OCTOBER 2026

Thank you for helping Thrive Pavilion build an even brighter future together.