



Thursday, October 16, 2025

Fireside Chats Begin Oct. 29 to Encourage Conversations, Connections

The City of Boone's Recreation Department is inviting seniors to pull up a chair, sip a cup of coffee or tea, and enjoy good conversations at its upcoming Fireside Chats series.

The new initiative, which is designed to foster connection, friendship, and community among Boone's older residents in a relaxed, welcoming setting, will begin Wednesday, Oct. 29, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Ericson Public Library's Fireplace Room.

"The nexus of idea come from learning post-pandemic that a lot of people were lacking in connection, friendships and companionship. So, that's the thrust of the program – to just get people back together, get people talking and making some connections that maybe weren't there before," recreation director Nathan Osmundson said.

The fireside chats will feature light refreshments, fun activities, and informal conversation starters to help participants get to know one another. Each session will begin with a "two-minute meet," a lighthearted version of speed-friending where participants briefly chat with several new people. From there, conversations may flow naturally into shared stories, games, or discussions about music, books, and life experiences.

Osmundson said the library's Fireplace Room offers the perfect setting for the new program. "When we talked with Library Director Jamie Williams, we realized what a great opportunity this space gives us. The idea of the 'fireside chat' really evokes that sense of warmth and relaxed communication – like those classic presidential radio talks years ago," he said. "I've done some of these groups in the past. I'll be there to facilitate, and clearly I will learn much, too."

Beyond conversation, the program may also serve as a springboard for future senior programming. "We want to hear what people are interested in – whether it's crafts, wellness, book clubs, or card games," he added. "This can be an incubator for other programs that our community wants to see."

Participation in the fireside chats is free, and no registration is required but participants may RSVP online. The program is open to residents age 55 and older. "Not that somebody who's younger couldn't join us but it will be during the day so it's more for the retired crowd," Osmundson said.

Information and updates can be found on both the city and library websites, as well as on the recreation department's Facebook page. Flyers will also be distributed at popular community locations.

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