

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

## **AGING NEWS**

For the week of February 27<sup>th</sup>

### **LATE WINTER BLUES-FIGHTERS**

Although the sun is staying up longer this time of year, by about three minutes a day, many older adults have just about had enough of winter by now. The “late winter blues” can compound the effects of seasonal depression. Feelings of isolation, disconnect, anxiety and stagnation can also impact levels of depression. But while we look for spring outside as well as on the calendar, here are some tips on how to boost your mental health, with help from Poughkeepsie-based Family Services (29 N. Hamilton St., [www.familyservicesny.org](http://www.familyservicesny.org)):

- **Seek Sunlight.** In Dutchess County, winter means fewer hours of natural sunlight, one of the root causes of seasonal depression. Some scientists theorize the lack of sunlight produces unstable and disruptive amounts of both melatonin, the hormone that helps us sleep; and serotonin, a neurotransmitter that affects mood. If you're not able to get out into the sun, investigate purchasing a light therapy lamp.

- **Get some exercise, indoors and out, even if it's cold.** The benefits of exercise for the health of our bodies are well-known, but recent studies also show exercise increases our sense of well-being and focus, likely from a boost in serotonin. Exercise is good for overall health, including mental health.

Speaking of exercise and strong mental health, join the Office for the Aging at our Poughkeepsie Friendship Center (114 Delafield St.) on Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. for a dual presentation covering exercise and falls prevention, as well as our new Friendly Calls program. Space is limited, so please contact OFA at 845-486-2555 to save your spot. Light snacks will be available.

- **Add Some Splashes of Color** – Try decorating with colors that invoke a feeling of warmth, such as yellows, oranges, and reds—which all happen to be hues of the sun. A few bright throw pillows could make all the difference.
- **Get Enough Vitamin D** – Consider a vitamin D supplement during the darkest three months of winter. Research indicates a vitamin D deficiency can result in diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, and even depression. Ask your doctor for more information regarding Vitamin D deficiency.
- **Set Your Sights on Something “Spring-y”** - While we might not be able to go on vacation to someplace warmer, there are other things you’ve no doubt

been wanting to do. Having something to look forward to is a sure blues buster. Try a new hobby; Office for the Aging Friendship Centers throughout the county are great places to start up new hobbies or renew older ones, with locations in Beacon, East Fishkill, Millerton, Pawling, Pleasant Valley (Tri-Town), Poughkeepsie, Red Hook, and South Amenia. Contact the Office for the Aging to find out more, and visit [www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition](http://www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition) for a look at this month's Friendship Center menus and activity calendars.

*Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114*

*Delafield St., Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, telephone 845-486-2555, email:*

*[ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov) website: [www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging)*

### **GET TO KNOW OFA AND “ELLI\*Q” (Wed 3/8)**

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging is holding a free demonstration and discussion of a new voice-operated smart technology companion for older adults, that goes by the name “ElliQ” (pronounced ELLY-Q). It's the first-ever proactive and empathetic care companion.

You can meet ElliQ on Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at the Lexington Club at Galleria (1964 South Rd (Route 9), Poughkeepsie. Space is limited to 50 participants, so please RSVP to 845-486-2555 if you can be there.

We're working to identify older adults who would most benefit from the technology.

ElliQ is designed with input from older adults, to foster independence and provide support through daily check-ins, assistance with wellness goals and physical activities, connection to family and friends, and more using voice commands and/or on-screen instructions. The technology, which recently launched commercially after years of pilots and early production deployments, has shown unprecedented engagement levels with older adults. Users have an average of 20 daily interactions.

View a demonstration at [www.elliq.com](http://www.elliq.com).

### **OFA VETERANS RESOURCE FORUM (Tue 3/14)**

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging (OFA) invites veterans of all ages and their families to its Veterans Resource Forum on Tuesday, March 14th at the Pavilion at Brookmeade, 34 Brookmeade Drive in Rhinebeck (just off Route 308,

east of the village), from 1 to 4 p.m. This free event will offer veterans and their families important information and connections to various agencies, including the County's Division of Veterans' Services, and service providers. Space is limited; reserve your seat by calling OFA at (845) 486-2555 during business hours.

Representatives from Mental Health America of Dutchess County, Rhinebeck at Home and the County's Department of Behavioral and Community Health's (DBCH) Mental Health Subcommittee are among the participating organizations that will be available to meet with veterans and their families and provide information on a wide range of topics, including mental health resources and veterans' benefits. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about the services available to them, ask questions and connect with other veterans and their families.

The County's Division of Veterans Services ([www.dutchessny.gov/veterans](http://www.dutchessny.gov/veterans)) ensures Dutchess County veterans and their families receive their maximum eligible benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other agencies at all levels of government. In 2022, the Division rendered 20,212 contact services to Dutchess County Veterans and their families regarding services and entitlements available from federal, state, and local government.

Mental Health America of Dutchess County offers numerous programs for veterans – including the Vet2Vet; Housing, Employment, Reintegration and Outreach Program (HERO); Veterans Employment Training & Transitions Assistance Program (VET-TAP) and Weekend 4 Warriors programs – that offer local veterans emotional support, educational information, referrals to useful services, information about support groups, Social Events, advocacy and short-term care management.

Rhinebeck at Home ([www.rhinebeckathome.org](http://www.rhinebeckathome.org)) is a locally based, non-profit organization with members dedicated to helping each other to remain in their own homes and stay connected to their community as they grow older.

A branch of the County’s Mental Hygiene Board, the Mental Health Subcommittee advises the DBCH Deputy Commissioner and Director of Community Services about issues in the community and suggests ideas for inclusion in the Department’s Service Plan, which is submitted to New York State annually.

## **CITIZEN’S PREPAREDNESS FOR OLDER ADULTS AND CAREGIVERS**

The Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response, with the Office for

the Aging and Town of Hyde Park, have scheduled a free Citizens Preparedness Training for Older Adults and Caregivers event at Hyde Park Town Hall (4383 Albany Post Rd. (Route 9)), at 10 am on Thursday, March 21st. Space is limited. Dutchess County residents over age 60 and their caregivers can sign up for this event by contacting the Office for the Aging at 845-486-2555 during business hours.

During the training, participants will learn resources and skills necessary to better prepare for any type of disaster, how to respond accordingly in a disaster, and how to recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions. Each household will receive a free Citizens Preparedness Response Starter Kit, along with information on Office for the Aging services.

To keep up with OFA's listings of activities, subscribe to the weekly Aging News e-newsletters by emailing [bjones@dutchessny.gov](mailto:bjones@dutchessny.gov) to be placed on our email list.

For those who are not online, we mail quarterly THRIVE60+ newsletters throughout Dutchess County. If you'd like to get on the mailing list or would like to update the address we have on file, call 845-486-2555. The Spring 2023 issue will be distributed soon!

## **Other news:**

100 tips for long life [from 100 centenarians](#) from around the world.

The family of actor Bruce Willis has disclosed that he is [living with frontotemporal dementia](#).

There's a new area code overlay coming to the 845 area code starting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. [Say hi to 329](#).

What to do about [your slow computer](#).

Beatles and Rolling Stones...[working together?](#)

## **This week's birthdays:**

2/26: Actor/director/Poughkeepsie native [Bill Duke](#) (80)

2/27: NBA Hall-of-Famer [James Worthy](#) (62)

2/28: Actor/director [John Turturro](#) (66)

2/29: U.S. astronaut [Jack Lousma](#) (Skylab 3)

3/1: Singer/activist [Harry Belafonte](#) (96)

3/2: Musician/songwriter [John Cowsill](#) (67)

3/3: Singer/songwriter [Jennifer Warnes](#) (76)

**And a Bad Joke, of course:**

Mountains aren't just funny. They're hill areas.