

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of June 6th

REMODELING FOR AGING-IN-PLACE

The best ideas for Golden Living columns often come from our readers. In this case, it was a friend of the Office for the Aging who read last week's Golden Living column on preventing home improvement scams targeting older adults looking to remodel their homes with an eye toward aging-in-place, and asked:

“What's aging-in-place?”

It's a simple question, with an answer that could easily fill more than one Golden Living column. We'll try to be brief.

When older adults are asked where they'd like to live out the rest of their lives, the most common answer we see is they'd prefer to stay in their own homes. It could either be the home they've known all their adult lives, or a smaller home tailored to their evolving needs as older adults. If their five kids are grown-and-flown, maybe their two-story, six-bedroom house is a bit much and they'd like to downsize. Or maybe it's still the right house if the right updates are made. We've

noticed three related trends relating to aging-in-place: families making space in their homes for older relatives; grown children returning home after college to live with parents and/or grandparents; and single parents sharing their home with their own parents.

Even for the healthiest older adults, aging will take a toll on physical abilities. Issues with vision and mobility tend to be the areas of greatest concern, so it follows that most remodeling projects should take those issues into account first.

AGING-IN-PLACE ON A SHOESTRING

Your list of things to improve is long, but money is short. Even for those with ready money, finding a reputable contractor with the time to take on your work can be a lengthy process. Finding the available materials can be chancy given supply-chain issues. What to do in the meantime?

If you're comfortable as a do-it-yourselfer, start with the simple things that are within your skillset and budget. If a doorknob is sticking, maybe this is the time to replace it with a lever-style door handle. Comfort-height toilet seats can improve a bathroom's safety and ease of use.

AGING IN PLACE WITH STYLE

A common early criticism of home safety products was that they looked “institutional” rather than matching an individual’s precedence. That’s no longer the case. As home safety merchandisers see the growing opportunity in the aging baby boomer market, they’ve started offering a far wider range of products that are both ADA-compliant as well as stylish.

AND KEEP IN MIND...

Rebuilding Together Dutchess County (www.rtdutchess.org; 845-454-7310) offers qualifying older adults a Rebuilding Day program for large-scale home repairs necessary to maintain a safe and healthy living environment. The program’s application window opens on June 1st and runs through August. Applications received during this time are considered for service in 2023.

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

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OFA SUMMER KITCHEN AND PICNIC VOLUNTEERS WANTED (HDM drivers, too!)

The Office for the Aging Summer Picnic Program needs your help!

The picnic program began this month, with 11 more to go between now and Labor Day. The full schedule is available at www.dutchessny.gov/OFApicnics.

Besides help at the picnics themselves, we also need help in the OFA central kitchen the Tuesday afternoon before each picnic. If you're available to help at any time between noon and 4 p.m. on Tuesday afternoons of any or all picnic weeks, please contact OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones at 845-486-2544 or bjones@dutchessny.gov. There's also a printable volunteering form at www.dutchessny.gov/aging that includes a description of OFA's diverse volunteering opportunities.

We're also looking for volunteer drivers for our weekday Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program, anywhere in Dutchess County but particularly in Beacon and in the Tri-Town (LaGrange, Pleasant Valley, Town of Poughkeepsie) area. Mileage reimbursement is provided for drivers who use their own vehicles. Contact OFA to find out more.

"GETSETUP" WITH OFA

GetSetUp (www.getsetup.io) is an online community of older adults who want to learn new skills and stay connected with others. The safe, social, and interactive GetSetUp learning environment has been specifically designed for older adults, with classes taught by older adults and kept small to ensure everyone can actively participate. Classes are FREE to older adults, with funding provided in this year's New York State budget. For more information, visit <https://www.getsetup.io/partner/NYSTATE>.

Other news:

(video) [How Alzheimer's disease changes the brain](#)

Type 2 diabetes [speeds aging in the brain](#).

Can the right nutrition fight off cognitive decline? [Possibly](#). (Read the whole thing; there's loads of useful information.)

Traveling this summer, or traveling with older loved ones? [Some tips](#).

This week's birthdays:

6/5: Journalist [Bill Moyers](#) (88)

6/6: Singer [Tom Jones](#) (82)

6/7: Director/producer/screenwriter [James Ivory](#) (94)

6/8: Singer/actress [Nancy Sinatra](#) (82)

6/9: Actor/author/activist [Michael J. Fox](#) (61)

6/10: Singer [Shirley Alston Reeves \(The Shirelles\)](#) (81)

6/11: Formula 1 race car driver [Jackie Stewart](#) (83)

And our Bad Joke:

Q: What do you call a camel with no humps?

A: Humphrey.