

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of August 31

Note: the Office for the Aging will be closed on Monday, September 7th, for the national Labor Day holiday. Clients of our Home Delivered Meals program will receive their meals in advance of the holiday.

Golden Living . . . News for Seniors, Their Families and Caregivers

Todd N. Tancredi, Director

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

(Second in a series of four monthly pedestrian safety columns, prepared in conjunction with Emily Dozier, Senior Planner with the Dutchess County Transportation Council; and Aisha Phillips, Senior Public Health Education Coordinator with the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health.)

Did you know that older adults (age 65+) are more likely to die as pedestrians than they are being in a vehicle? Our bodies are much more vulnerable when we're walking; we aren't protected by steel, seat belts, and air bags. Older adults are particularly vulnerable because their bones are more brittle, eyesight is typically weaker, and reaction time is longer.

None of that indicates that we shouldn't walk; in fact, regular weight-bearing exercise such as walking is critical to building bone density and maintaining fitness and health.

Dutchess County's Complete Streets Committee (www.dutchessny.gov/CompleteStreets) is working to make it safer to walk, bicycle, drive, and ride the bus in Dutchess County. The "Watch Out For Me" campaign (www.dutchessny.gov/WatchOutForMe) includes tips and resources to help you be safer when driving, bicycling, or walking.

Walking can be a very different experience depending on where in the county you're doing it. In the City of Poughkeepsie, two-thirds of pedestrian-

vehicle crashes occur at intersections. In suburban and rural areas, the percentage is lower, but it's important to know how to cross an intersection safely.

As a rule, intersections are a good place to cross because they often have crosswalks and sometimes have pedestrian signals. But drivers may also be turning, so keep your eyes out: always watch for turning vehicles, especially those turning left, as the driver may not be looking and may not see you.

Before you step off a curb, look left, right, and left again. That second look left helps in the event of a vehicle that wasn't moving the first time you looked but is now pulling into traffic. These drivers may be looking for other vehicles and not watching for you.

Take care stepping off the curb into the street. There may be potholes or uneven pavement. Avoid stepping into puddles. Just as drivers are advised not to attempt traveling flooded roads, you shouldn't step into a puddle where you can't see how deep it is.

If there is a pedestrian signal, use it to your advantage. Push the button and wait for the Walk signal (walking person). If the Don't Walk (red hand) is flashing, don't start to cross. Push the button again and wait for the next Walk signal.

Some pedestrian signals have a countdown timer. This tells you how many seconds are left to cross. Learn how much time you need to cross the streets you use most often.

Even when you have the Walk signal, check left, right, and left again, and watch for turning vehicles.

If there is an intersection that needs pedestrian safety improvements, let your local officials know. Depending on who's responsible for maintenance on any given roadway, they may need to coordinate with New York State or Dutchess County to make improvements.

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FRIENDS OF SENIORS SEEKS PHONE COMPANIONSHIP, DRIVING VOLUNTEERS

It's possible to volunteer on behalf of Dutchess County seniors while continuing to maintain physical safety.

Poughkeepsie-based Friends of Seniors (www.friendsofseniors.org, 845-240-0241/485-1277) offers volunteer opportunities for remote phone companionship, and is also seeking volunteer drivers using their own vehicles to assist seniors who have limited transportation options, for non-emergency medical appointments and grocery shopping.

Volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage at .30/mile, and have excess coverage of up to \$1,000,000 when, and only when, the client is in your car.

Please get in touch with them if you can help. Friends of Seniors is partially funded by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging and Dutchess County Department of Planning.

Other aging news online:

A partial roundup of the latest identity theft scams that often target seniors:

https://magazine.northeast.aaa.com/daily/money/credit-cards/identity-theft-scams-keep-eye/?mqsc=ED4116063&utm_source=AdobeEmail&utm_medium=Daily&utm_campaign=200826_YourAAADaily&cid=DM158657&bid=1816148370&hme=f0cf0a8a5b7325e0660e56c41aa6b7ce5658c27c483fece30d7a8bcf02463554

Since it's an election year, there are also absentee ballot scams. Here's some useful information from the American Bar Association:

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_aging/publications/bifocal/vol-41/vol-41--issue-no-6--july-august-2020-/beware-absentee-ballot-scams/

This week in senior birthdays:

8/29: Actor/producer Elliott Gould (82)

8/30: Businessman/philanthropist Warren Buffett (90)

8/31: Singer/songwriter Van Morrison (75)

9/1: Comedy legend Lily Tomlin (81)

9/2: NFL Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw (72)

9/3: Singer-songwriter Al Jardine (The Beach Boys) (78)

9/4: Actress/singer/dancer Mitzi Gaynor (89)

And putting the wrap on the week, another Bad Joke:

I went to the paint store to get thinner. It didn't work.