

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of December 13th

THE UPCOMING 3G NETWORK SHUTDOWN AND HOW IT AFFECTS SENIORS

Adapting to new technology is a double-edged sword for seniors: While it opens vast new possibilities for seniors to stay connected, the speed of advances in technology may not quite register with seniors who came of age in an era of built-to-last products. Nana's got a cast iron skillet her own grandmother brought over from Italy. Dad's still got the pair of boots he wore at Woodstock. Grandpa is still wearing the watch he wore in Korea. That iPhone 4S wasn't cheap, it's only nine years old, it's paid for, and it's only used to make calls. Why change?

The answer has to do with the nature of advances in the technology that uses wireless networks - not just phones, but older medical devices, tablets, home security systems and other connected products. Newer, faster, and more reliable technology can't move forward unless older technology using the same wireless network space is phased out.

Older devices may need to be upgraded or replaced next year. That's because the "3G" network on which older devices operate is being phased out during 2022, so providers can begin using faster and more advanced network services. 3G stands for "third generation," and it's being replaced with 5G, which is – you guessed it! – the fifth generation technology standard for broadband cellular networks.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) notes three key benefits to 5G networks:

- Much higher data rates, enabling consumers to download content more quickly;
- Much lower latency (delayed network response) — measured in milliseconds, imperceptible to humans; and
- Increased capacity as the network expands.

Still, anybody who's driven through rural areas knows there are stubborn "dead zones" where consistent mobile coverage is all but impossible to come by. On the other hand, it's encouraging to know that 5G will be using some of the frequencies once used by over-the-air TV broadcasts. In theory, if your home

picked up those TV broadcasts, 5G has a good chance of being available at your home as well.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY PHONE IF I DON'T UPGRADE?

As a rule, if your phone dates to 2012 or earlier, there's a good chance it won't be much use next year without being upgraded or replaced. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), many older phones will become unable to make or receive calls or texts, including 911 services.

Your provider will know if the end of 3G is going to be an issue for you and your device, and they may have discounts available for older customers. With continuing worldwide supply chain difficulties, what specific device replaces an old 3G device may be hard for providers to answer.

The rotary phone in your kitchen will still work just fine, although its mobility is limited by the length of the cord.

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

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HOLIDAY ADVISORIES

The Office for the Aging and all OFA Senior Friendship Centers will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Friday, December 24th; and for the New Year's Day holiday on Friday, December 31st.

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program will receive shelf-stable meals in advance of each holiday.

HIGH SPEED INTERNET SURVEY

It's one thing to complain that you're not getting the internet service you pay for every month...and another thing to be able to do something about it.

Reliably fast broadband internet service is a must for everyone, even those who have no home internet connection at all and feel no need for any kind of home computer or handheld device. Your community's public safety operations, health care providers, merchants and so much more, all rely on solid broadband connections.

That's why Dutchess County is surveying county residents to identify specific gaps in broadband coverage.

There are other governments doing similar surveys. The Town of Stanford recently conducted one, for which they are awaiting results. The State of New York and Federal government are also surveying broadband needs, but it's the closest-to-home surveys like ours that are likely to pinpoint needs most accurately.

To take the survey and learn more about the County's High-Speed Internet Access Initiative as well as the importance of broadband access for all, visit dutchessny.gov/highspeedinternet. Additional questions can be emailed to broadband@dutchessny.gov.

For those who are not online or have only limited internet access, contact Dutchess County Emergency Management at 845-486-2080.

VIRTUAL DEMENTIA CONVERSATIONS WITH PAWLING LIBRARY (1/18/22)

The Pawling Library and the Alzheimer's Association are presenting a free virtual event "Dementia Conversations" on Tuesday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m.

Topics covered will include going to the doctor; deciding when to stop driving; making legal and financial plans, and more.

To RSVP, email adult@pawlinglibrary.org

Other aging news online:

Strategies to protect your Social Security 2022 cost-of-living adjustment from higher Medicare premiums and other costs:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/22/ways-to-protect-your-social-security-cost-of-living-adjustment-in-2022.html>

It may soon become easier to detect Alzheimer's disease earlier:

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/changes-small-area-brainstem-could-help-detect-alzheimers-disease-earlier>

Mild cognitive impairment in older adults...can disappear?

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-12-02/mild-cognitive-impairment-in-older-age-often-disappears-study-finds>

Businesses looking to sell to seniors are changing the tone of their marketing...with the word “old” being a big no-no:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/business/dealbook/marketing-older-people.html>

This week in senior birthdays:

12/13: Actor/singer/dancer Dick Van Dyke (96)

12/14: Tennis player Stan Smith (75)

12/15: Actor Don Johnson (72)

12/16: Singer/songwriter Benny Andersson (Abba) (75)

12/17: Pope Francis (85)

12/18: Chef/author Jacques Pépin (86)

12/19: Paleontologist Richard Leakey (77)

And a Bad Joke or three, as the holidays get closer:

Q: What question did the snowman keep asking?

A: "Does anyone else smell carrots?"

Q: How does a gingerbread man make his bed?

A: He starts with a cookie sheet.

Q: Why do birds fly south for the winter?

A: It's much easier than walking.