

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of March 23rd

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

Todd N. Tancredi, Director

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

The Office for the Aging is postponing or cancelling its events and workshops for the foreseeable future due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The health of our seniors, their families and caregivers must come first. At the same time, we want to be ready to resume regular activities as much as our seniors do. What we all learn during this outbreak will continue to help us when restrictions on activities are lifted.

We're incorporating the need for "social distancing" to prevent the spread of the virus with OFA's mission of helping seniors reach their goal of happy, healthy independent living. With thousands of Dutchess County seniors living alone, we want to prevent the dangers that come with isolation, as well as the dangers that come with disease. You can help.

We still encourage you to check in on your senior friends and neighbors - but take precautions as you do so, to protect both your health and theirs. The simple act of dropping off food may require extra social-distancing steps to prevent possible virus transmission.

Since social media is full of information (and misinformation) about ways to help, this column will focus on proven local solutions that are available to everybody regardless of internet access.

Many regular Office for the Aging volunteer helpers are themselves seniors, and thus have been unavailable for their usual volunteering. Assuming you are free from health vulnerabilities, you can help distribute essential nutrition to homebound seniors. Call us at 486-2555 to find out more.

One of the easiest ways to help seniors stay connected safely is through phone conversations. Poughkeepsie-based Friends of Seniors (485-1277) is a key resource in this area, if you are looking for a way to help.

If you have a question or concern about COVID-19/coronavirus, Dutchess County has a call center available at (845) 486-3555. It's staffed by employees of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health, and volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). As this article went to press, the hotline was

available during 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. weekday business hours, but organizers are exploring the possibility of making additional hours available. Again, you can help. To volunteer with the MRC, call (845) 486-2493.

OFA's May 18th *Celebration of Aging* luncheon has been postponed and will be rescheduled, if possible. We're still accepting nominations for 2020 Senior Citizen of the Year honors, which are awarded at the Celebration. For more information, call (845) 486-2555.

And with hopes of returning to something resembling normal by summer, the annual OFA Senior Picnic schedule remains unaffected for now.

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

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SENIORS-FRIENDLY SHOPPING HOURS AT LOCAL STORES

Many local grocers and retailers have adjusted their operating hours to deal

with the COVID-19 preparedness; in addition, many stores have set aside “senior-friendly” shopping hours for seniors age 60 and above. Here’s a link, which also includes information about our Home Delivered Meals program:

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Aging/OFA-Home-Delivered-Meals-Groceries.htm>

The special hours may also apply to some under-60 shoppers, most notably pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions. Check ahead with your local merchant to find out more, because hours may have to be adjusted with little or no notice.

A RECAP OF OFA-RELATED CANCELLATIONS

The Office for the Aging is postponing or cancelling several events and workshops due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

OFA Senior Friendship Centers are closed until further notice. All OFA senior group exercise, A Matter of Balance, Tai Chi and Brain Games classes are canceled until further notice. Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) counselors have postponed all face-to-face sessions. All face-to-face legal counseling sessions have been postponed for at least the next two

weeks.

All OFA off-site presentations and Medicare workshops are cancelled until further notice.

The April 18th “Extra Credit” seniors event at Rhinebeck High School has been cancelled. The May 2nd “Smarter Aging” event in Fishkill has been postponed; organizers are hoping to reschedule.

OFA’s May 18th Celebration of Aging luncheon has been postponed and will be rescheduled, if possible. We’re still accepting nominations for 2020 Senior Citizen of the Year honors, which are awarded at the Celebration.

Our summer Senior Picnic schedule remains unaffected thus far, although all picnic dates and venues remain subject to change. For more information, contact the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555, or email ofa@dutchessny.gov.

“SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS” and “AGING NEWS” ONLINE

Remember, OFA’s quarterly “Spotlight on Seniors” newsletter, and all editions of the “Golden Living”/“Aging News” e-newsletter, are available in the Senior News and Events section of www.dutchessny.gov/aging.

Keep in mind that most of the events mentioned in the Spring 2020 “Spotlight” have been either postponed or cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak, after the paper editions of the “Spotlight” were printed and mailed. When dates are updated, we’ll let you know.

HUDSON VALLEY HONOR FLIGHTS POSTPONED

Hudson Valley Honor Flight (www.hvhonorflight.com, (845) 391-0076) has tentatively rescheduled their two May 2020 flights honoring local American veterans for dates in the fall. Their flight out of Westchester County Airport will now take place September 19th and their flight out of New York Stewart International Airport will now take place October 10th.

TAX-PREP DISRUPTED BY COVID-19

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide sites have suspended service until further notice:

https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/

The Hudson Valley CA\$H Coalition and Tax-Aide program adds:

“We are currently working to notify all clients with current tax preparation

appointments of the suspension of service and have notified all host sites. To be clear, we will not be able to reopen any tax sites or provide direct client service without the authorization of AARP Foundation. We are working very closely with the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program to provide whatever guidance we can to our clients and as updates are provided, we will apprise the community. Thank you for your understanding during these difficult times.”

Other aging news online:

How to care for the elderly without putting them at risk of coronavirus:

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/12/qa-how-to-care-for-the-elderly-without-putting-them-at-risk-of-coronavirus/>

Coronavirus tips for dementia caregivers: [https://alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care?WT.mc_id=enews2020_03_18&utm_source=enews-aff-118&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=enews-2020-03-18&utm_content=homeoffice&utm_term=Story1](https://alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care?WT.mc_id=enews2020_03_18&utm_source=enews-aff-118&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=enews-2020-03-18&utm_content=homeoffice&utm_term=Story1)

Looking for ways to help? Here's the Dutchess County list of volunteering opportunities: <https://www.dutchessny.gov/Business/volunteer-opportunities.htm>

This week in senior birthdays:

3/23: Singer-songwriter Chaka Khan (67)

3/24: Fashion designer Bob Mackie (81)

3/25: Singer/songwriter Elton John (73)

3/26: Singer/songwriter Diana Ross (76)

3/27: Musician/songwriter Tony Banks (Genesis) (70)

3/28: Japanese artist/calligrapher Toko Shinoda (107)

3/29: Comedian/actor Eric Idle (77)

Come what may, the Bad Jokes will continue:

There are three types of people in the world: those who can count, and those who can't.