

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

## **AGING NEWS**

For the week of May 11th

### **Important Notices:**

Our offices remain open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday – Friday. **We remain able to accept visitors only under strict limitations. Call or email before visiting. Many issues can be resolved without having to leave the safety of your home:**

845-486-2555, or [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov).

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

***Todd N. Tancredi, Director***

***Dutchess County Office for the Aging***

2020 CENSUS DELAYED, BUT CONTINUING

It can be difficult to think long-term during a pandemic, but the COVID-19/coronavirus pandemic is having effects not directly related to the disease itself, both now and long after the pandemic runs its course, whenever that might be. We at the Office for the Aging are doing our best to be ready for these additional effects – for example, the changes to this year’s U.S. Census that eliminated much of its traditional in-person outreach.

Data gathered in the once-a-decade U.S. Census will be used to decide how trillions of dollars in taxpayer money is allocated over the next ten years. For seniors, that means funding for Medicare, medical transportation, OFA nutrition for homebound seniors and more are all at stake. An accurate Census count is a tremendously important civic duty.

As of last (Tuesday, the New York state census self-response rate was 51.6%, several points behind the national rate of 57.3%. Dutchess County’s self-response rate stood at 55.7%.) We’re a bit behind our 2010 response rate – understandable given circumstances, but your response is still essential.

If you did not already complete the Census, you can do so at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov), or by phone toll-free at (844) 330-2020. Language assistance is available online in English and 59 other languages; over the phone,

assistance is available in English and 12 other languages. Telephone Display Device (TDD) assistance is also available for people who have hearing impairments, at 844-467-2020.

If you received a paper Census questionnaire in the mail, you can complete that and return it to the address provided. Traditional in-person census taker visits for those who do not self-respond were to have begun this month, but the pandemic has made it necessary to push the start of in-person visits to at least August.

For more information on aspects of the Census specific to Dutchess County, visit the county's Complete Count Committee at [www.dutchessny.gov/census2020](http://www.dutchessny.gov/census2020).

## **RETHINKING AT "REBUILDING TOGETHER"**

Like many Dutchess County organizations, traditional operations at Rebuilding Together Dutchess County ([www.rebuildingtogetherdutchess.org](http://www.rebuildingtogetherdutchess.org), (845) 454-7310) are on hold for now, but they expect that they'll eventually be cleared to resume their mission of repairing homes and performing fire safety and fire prevention installations. For now, RTDC continues to solicit program

applicants. You can call or email them ([info@rebuildingtogethersedutchess.org](mailto:info@rebuildingtogethersedutchess.org)) for more information.

***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)***

## **OFA TAI CHI VIDEO NOW ON YOUTUBE**

With our Senior Exercise and Tai Chi classes on hiatus, here's a quick sample of Tai Chi exercises courtesy of one of our instructors:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWsbXE5Xt2c&feature=youtu.be>

## **2020 SENIOR PICNICS POSTPONED**

Due to the COVID-19/coronavirus, the 2020 season of summer Office for the Aging Senior Picnics has been indefinitely postponed. The picnics are the most well-attended events on the OFA calendar, but given current circumstances a postponement is the safest of all choices.

We hope to be able to safely reschedule the picnics.

## **A “CELEBRATION OF AGING” IN YOUR MAILBOX**

While this year’s OFA “Celebration of Aging” could not be held due to COVID-19 restrictions, we still want to honor the Dutchess County seniors achieving outstanding feats of aging in 2020.

If you know any Dutchess County residents who will turn 100 at any time in 2020, or if you know any married couples from Dutchess County who will celebrate a wedding anniversary of 70 years or more in 2020, let us know about it – especially if you yourself fit one or both of the categories. Send name(s), age (for centenarians), number of years married (for couples), hometown and a brief biography to [bjones@dutchessny.gov](mailto:bjones@dutchessny.gov), along with contact information if we need to ask follow-up questions. If you have any pictures, send those along too. If they wish to share any secrets as to the longevity of their lives and marriages, we youngsters who haven’t yet reached those milestones want to know about that also.

**Please get your information to us by Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

The centenarians and long-married couples will be honored in the Summer 2020 issue of our *Spotlight on Seniors* newsletter, scheduled to be mailed in June.

You can sign up for emailed weekly updates and special announcements from the Office for the Aging, along with advisories and alerts from other Dutchess County departments, by using the Dutchess Delivery feature at [www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov). If you don't have internet access, call the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555 and we'll see to it that you're added to our postal mailing list for the *Spotlight on Seniors*. We mail it out four times a year, plus a Medicare-focused edition in September. The newsletters are also available on the county website.

Whenever libraries and municipal buildings are authorized to re-open, the *Spotlight on Seniors* will also be available there, while supplies last.

## **NEWS FROM DUTCHESS COUNTY'S UTILITIES**

Both public utilities serving Dutchess County, Central Hudson ([www.cenhud.com](http://www.cenhud.com), (845) 452-2700 or (800) 527-2714 outside the 845) and NYSEG ([www.nyseg.com](http://www.nyseg.com), (800) 572-1111), are getting the word out about service advisories and other features added in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

First, from Central Hudson...

- Late fees and reconnection fees are waived
- Suspension of terminations for residential and non-residential accounts
- Restored any service that had limited usage and restored it to full service
- Collection practices have ceased, and payment agreement terms have been revised to ensure every customer who needs one will get one
- Referrals are being made to the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), which has been extended through June 30<sup>th</sup> or until funds are depleted. Seniors looking for more information can contact the Office for the Aging.
- Requirements to receive a Good Neighbor Fund and Veteran's grant have been revised to make it easier to apply for assistance. Central Hudson has doubled their company match into our Good Neighbor Fund which is administered through local Salvation Army offices from \$50K match to \$100k match to increase the money that is available in the fund going forward.
- Outbound Call Campaign – wellness checks to our vulnerable customers to check on them to see how they are doing and offer them any resources that are

available in their community that they made need (food, day care, health care, shelter, etc...)

- Instructing employees to follow Center for Disease Control guidance on maintaining a safe distance of six feet from others, wearing masks when self-distancing cannot be assured and using personal protection equipment when attending to emergencies inside homes or buildings. Only going inside of homes if it involves an emergency or moving, and a customer needs service unlocked. All non-emergency work is being delayed.

- Employee Food Drive

According to a statement from NYSEG, the utility serving much of eastern Dutchess (along with parts of Putnam and Westchester), the following advisories have been issued:

- NYSEG has suspended late payment charges, disconnections for non-payment, and required security deposits for new accounts. Please contact NYSEG if you would like to discuss your account and manage your payments.
- NYSEG customers may qualify for assistance. Please call 888.315.1755 to learn more.

- HEAP and Emergency HEAP have been extended to remain open until June 30, or when funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. Additionally, a third Emergency HEAP benefit is available to eligible households experiencing a crisis or life-threatening heat or heat-related energy emergency.
- Your donation to the Project SHARE Heating Fund helps income-eligible customers with energy emergencies. Active duty military personnel and well-discharged veterans with an active disconnect notice may qualify for help regardless of income.

**Other aging news online:**

A roundup of some local COVID-related news, with emphasis on northeastern

Dutchess: [https://tricornernews.com/millerton-news-regional/molinaro-announces-plans-restarting-dutchess-gov-cuomo-systematic-how-re?fbclid=IwAR0NT4Hmk-PWiZ8PJvR2ydr-zTVYn\\_dfJYEgkC6SBQ7sEcR9IQcGsl-1PV8](https://tricornernews.com/millerton-news-regional/molinaro-announces-plans-restarting-dutchess-gov-cuomo-systematic-how-re?fbclid=IwAR0NT4Hmk-PWiZ8PJvR2ydr-zTVYn_dfJYEgkC6SBQ7sEcR9IQcGsl-1PV8)

The future of this summer's local fairs and festivals is up in the air:

<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/story/entertainment/2020/05/07/summer-without-festivals-coronavirus-impact-may-mean-cancellations/3078535001/?fbclid=IwAR0DUNIL4x8LbM5GzhteJXpkvi7puBtQgJbWkq7R3GyRT9WxHQG-061OGFg>

Some reassuring findings after earlier concerns about the use of the drug raniditine (Zantac):

[https://www.medpagetoday.com/meetingcoverage/ddw/86314?xid=nl\\_mpt\\_DHE\\_2020-05-06&utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Daily%20Headlines%20Top%20Cat%20HeC%20%202020-05-06&utm\\_term=NL\\_Daily\\_DHE\\_dual-gmail-definition](https://www.medpagetoday.com/meetingcoverage/ddw/86314?xid=nl_mpt_DHE_2020-05-06&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Daily%20Headlines%20Top%20Cat%20HeC%20%202020-05-06&utm_term=NL_Daily_DHE_dual-gmail-definition)

Those needing in-home care have an extra difficulty to cope with during the outbreak – as do the aides providing the care:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/for-those-needing-in-home-care-a->

[dire-decision-amid-a-pandemic/2020/05/05/e271d18c-88b5-11ea-ac8a-fe9b8088e101\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/dire-decision-amid-a-pandemic/2020/05/05/e271d18c-88b5-11ea-ac8a-fe9b8088e101_story.html)

**Finally, a government-approved Bad Joke to complete your week:**

Q: Why should you never use “beef stew” as a computer password?

A: It’s not stroganoff.

## USEFUL LINKS

[Centers For Disease Control](#)

[Coronavirus Testing Sites in Dutchess County](#)

[New York State Government](#)

[Dutchess Tourism Open Restaurant List](#) (Takeout/pickup/delivery only)

IRS Coronavirus Tax/Refund Information: [www.irs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.irs.gov/coronavirus)

[Office for the Aging Senior Friendship Center Contact Information](#)

Note: Friendship Centers are operating only as distribution hubs for the Home Delivered Meals program. They are not currently open to senior clients or the general public.

[Other Community Resources in Dutchess County](#) – this covers a little bit of everything, including a listing of what’s available in each municipality in Dutchess County.

[Scam Prevention Resources from the Office for the Aging](#)

[Spanish Language Coronavirus Information](#)