

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of October 12th

Note: the Office for the Aging is closed on Monday, October 12th, for the national Columbus 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

The 2020-21 season for New York's Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), which provides a one-time payment to the heating fuel supplier for households who meet eligibility requirements, officially opens on Monday, November 2nd. That's over a week earlier than last winter's opening date.

Benefit amounts for the 2020-21 season have increased slightly from last winter: Depending on income, the benefit amount for most senior citizens who heat their homes with oil, kerosene or propane is \$710. If you heat with wood, pellets, coal or corn heating types, the amount is \$560. Utilities like Central Hudson and NYSEG, the two with coverage areas that include Dutchess County, have a benefit amount this year of \$385.

Households that do not pay for heat directly, but instead make undesignated payments for the heat in the form of rent, may be eligible for a heat-included benefit. Depending on income, this payment can range from \$40 to \$45; payment can go to the household or the utility.

If you received HEAP this past season, you should have already received an application by mail from New York State. A few application packets may have mistakenly directed you to return the application to our former address at 27 High St. in Poughkeepsie – but as of early 2019, our offices are at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie, just east of Route 9 near Marist College.

If you have not received an application, but meet the eligibility requirements that we list in the next paragraph, call the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555. New applicants must complete a HEAP application and interview,

and provide proof of each household member's identity (including valid Social Security number), proof of residence, a fuel and/or utility bill if you pay for heat or proof that you pay rent that includes heat, and verification of all household members' income.

Eligibility is updated annually and based on monthly income and household size. For single-person households, monthly income should not exceed \$2,610. Two-person households have an income cut-off of \$3,413, and the cut-off increases with household size to \$7,378 for a household of 11; cut-offs increase by \$560 per person beyond 11. If your household's income is just above these maximums, you might still be eligible because your Medicare Part B and Part D premiums can be deducted from income.

Once your HEAP application is processed, you will receive a HEAP Notice of Eligibility by mail. Keep this notice in a safe place. If you have an emergency, do not wait until you are out of heating fuel or your gas/electric service is terminated to request assistance. Your utility company is not required to restore your service, even if you are eligible for a HEAP benefit. Emergency (crisis assistance) HEAP does not open until January 4, 2021, and there will be no emergency benefits available before that date.

For more information, subscribe to the “Aging News” and other alerts from Dutchess County government by joining the county’s Dutchess Delivery service at www.dutchessny.gov/DutchessDelivery.

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 website: www.dutchessny.gov/aging

FALL MEDICARE SPOTLIGHT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Office for the Aging this month is mailing its fourth annual Medicare-focused special edition of the “Spotlight on Seniors” newsletter.

It’s already available online at www.dutchessny.gov/aging, and will soon be distributed at libraries and municipal buildings throughout Dutchess County.

Because of the pandemic, not every facility is open to the public, so check ahead before stopping in.

Other aging news online:

New York State voting information, including deadlines:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/nyregion/register-to-vote-nyc.html>

Hold still for this story, for just a moment. Seniors walk faster than they did 30 years ago: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/wellness/elderly-people-walk-1mph-faster-now-than-pensioners-30-years-ago/ar-BB19kNxM?li=BBnb7Kz>

Some reminders on safe fall driving, including advice on what to do about leaves and fog: https://magazine.northeast.aaa.com/daily/life/cars-trucks/how-to-drive-safely-in-the-fall/?mqsc=ED4116063&utm_source=AdobeEmail&utm_medium=Daily&utm_campaign=201006_YourAAADaily&cid=DM164577&bid=1953894526&hme=f0cf0a8a5b7325e0660e56c41aa6b7ce5658c27c483fece30d7a8bcf02463554

While we're on the driving topic, what about deer that tend to run out into the road, especially in the fall? "Be vigilant" is the common-sense advice. "Don't swerve" is less intuitive but also helpful. Here's some advice from Canada, where wildlife in the road is a regular thing...including large wildlife like moose and bear:

<https://wildliferoadsharing.tirf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/WRRC-Myths-and-Misconceptions-4.pdf>

Starting in the new year, hospitals are required to provide clearer pricing information about the services they offer. Here's a link with information for consumers and providers: [https://www.cms.gov/outreach-and-](https://www.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/outreachffsprovpartprogprovider-partnership-email-archive/2020-10-01-mlnc#_Toc52362440)

[educationoutreachffsprovpartprogprovider-partnership-email-archive/2020-10-01-mlnc#_Toc52362440](https://www.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/outreachffsprovpartprogprovider-partnership-email-archive/2020-10-01-mlnc#_Toc52362440)

UK centenarian and WWII veteran Captain Sir Tom Moore is urging people to have meaningful conversations with older people, who often don't get the human contact they need, even without factoring in the pandemic. If you've never heard of "Captain Tom," his is quite a story:

https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/oct/05/older-people-are-often-lonely-chat-with-them-urges-capt-tom-moore?CMP=fb_gu&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0OEyRosKrZ6wuqYedEdPhkasd-72ZGqVKhmCcF44SLyMTnwbvOAqb1Yfg#Echobox=1601881896

A study that claims dancing helps seniors avoid falls:

https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2020/10/01/Study-finds-dancing-helps-seniors-avoid-falls/6981601568738/

Who wants to (virtually) go to the zoo? Here's a couple of great links, one that covers the whole country...<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/03/at-home/best-animal-feeds.html> ...and one from Millbrook:

<https://www.millbrook.org/animals/trevor-zoo-live>

Keep in mind that some zoos have re-opened, but under reservations-only timed entry.

This week in senior birthdays:

10/10: Actor/singer/dancer Ben Vereen (74)

10/11: Singer/songwriter Daryl Hall (74)

10/12: Yankees shortstop/sportscaster Tony Kubek (85)

10/13: Disc jockey "Cousin Brucie" Morrow (85)

10/14: Fashion designer Ralph Lauren (81)

10/15: Artist/Dutchess County resident Brice Marden (82)

10/16: Actress/singer Dame Angela Lansbury (95)

And here's a Bad Joke to get you through the three-day weekend. This one's for the cat lovers and English teachers out there:

Q: What's the difference between a cat and a comma?

A: A cat has claws at the end of its paws, and a comma is a pause at the end of a clause.