

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of October 19th

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

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Dutchess County Office for the Aging

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT IS UNDERWAY

Medicare's annual open enrollment period got underway on October 15th and will continue until enrollment ends on December 7th for coverage that goes into effect on January 1st, 2021.

The basics, first: Medicare is the federal government program that provides health insurance coverage when you are 65 years of age or older, or under age 65 with Social Security Disability Insurance, regardless of your income.

Medicare Part A is free for legal American residents who have worked 40 “Social Security” quarters. Medicare Part B has a monthly premium, the cost of which is determined each year. In 2020, that premium has been \$144.60. A decision on the 2021 premium is expected in early November; with estimates of the 2021 rate made difficult by the COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump signed a measure passed by Congress in late September to cap the 2021 premium increase at 25% of what it would have been otherwise.

Maybe you watch Medicare developments closely – or you’re worried this is already getting too complicated for you. That’s why the Office for the Aging offers volunteer counselors trained in HIICAP – our Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program. HIICAP counselors provide free and unbiased information on Medicare plans that match up most effectively with your individual health insurance needs.

All HIICAP counseling is taking place remotely this year, and appointments with counselors will fill up quickly, so contact the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555 to reserve your time slot. If all our appointment slots are filled, the New York State HIICAP hotline is available for help by calling (800) 701-0501.

MEDICARE “SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS” COMING TO MAILBOXES AND LIBRARIES

Whether you’re new to Medicare this year or you’ve benefited from it for decades, learning about how Medicare can serve you best can be complicated. Such is the nature of a program with a 2021 budget around \$728 billion.

That’s why OFA publishes an annual *Medicare Spotlight* newsletter every fall, to condense the most important points about upcoming Medicare changes into an easy-to-read, localized form. It’ll help you focus on what decisions to make regarding your future health insurance needs. You can find the *Medicare Spotlight* at public libraries throughout Dutchess County that are open to the public. In-person visits to some libraries may be restricted depending on COVID-19 rules, so check ahead before visiting.

If you’re on our mailing list for print copies of our newsletters, the *Medicare Spotlight* will be arriving soon. You can also find the *Medicare Spotlight* in the “Senior News and Events” section of www.dutchessny.gov/aging, along with the recently published Fall *Spotlight on Seniors* and an archive of earlier newsletters.

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**FIRST DRIVE-IN BINGO A SUCCESS; TWO MORE COMING UP THIS WEEK (Tue
10/20 and Thu 10/22)**

The Office for the Aging held its first drive-in Bingo game on Wednesday, October 14th at Bowdoin Park in Poughkeepsie, as almost 100 seniors from around the county took part in the fun. County Executive Marc Molinaro and Senator Sue Serino helped call the numbers and hand out prizes, including maple syrup made at the park, to the winners. This successful event is just another way the OFA is adapting its offerings to continue to enhance the lives of seniors while adhering to safety protocols.

There are two more chances to play this coming week: on Tuesday, October 20th at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in Rhinebeck, and on Thursday, October 22nd Thomas J. Boyce in Wingdale on Thursday. **Please register in advance** by calling OFA at (845) 486-2555.

If you already played at the Bowdoin Park event...you can still reserve spots

at either of the other two bingo events.

Here's a video of some of the bingo action at Bowdoin Park:

<https://www.facebook.com/DutchessCoGov/posts/10158281858488347>

FREE COMPUTER CLASSES (WITH REGISTRATION) AT RED HOOK COMMUNITY CENTER

A series of free, socially-distanced classes for adults and seniors is taking place on Wednesdays at Red Hook Community Center (59 Fisk St.). Advance registration is required, as is wearing a mask; call (845) 758-0077 or email programdirector@redhookcommunitycenter.org before visiting.

HELPFUL IDEAS FROM MILLBROOK@HOME

The following was sent to us this week by the Millbrook@Home seniors' group (www.millbrookathome.org for more information):

“Winter is coming, perhaps sooner than we wish! Most of us living in this area love the change of seasons. We bring in our plants for the winter, get out our favorite sweaters, take drives into the woods, walk to a spot overlooking the

Hudson River, and appreciate the colorful leaves, and beautiful clouds these days bring.

This year we may have to miss some of the activities we normally participate in, like attending special Fall festivals, or eating at a favorite restaurant along the Hudson. Even so, there is much to be thankful for and look forward to doing.

If you are having trouble focusing on the good there are some things you can do...

- Everyday, take some time to think about the things you are grateful for....friends, family, some of the new activities you may have started this year, etc. Write them down and focus on why they make you happy.

- Turn off the TV and focus on the positive stories about the many wonderful things others are doing to help their neighbors...those they know and those they don't...through volunteer work, donations, and other supportive efforts.

You could do the same!

- Say hello to a new neighbor; share fresh baked cookies with the folks across the street, support your local businesses, sew face masks for donation, spend some time at a local charity, volunteer to make supportive phone calls to those who are alone. I'm sure you can think of more.

Most important, if you find yourself thinking about the bad, turn it around, and focus on the good. Or, how you can bring more good into the lives of others. You can do it!"

Other aging news online:

Dutchess County coronavirus safety guidelines for Halloween:

<https://www.facebook.com/DutchessCoGov/photos/a.81754183346/10158281381423347/>

One look at the outlook for senior housing: <https://www.nextavenue.org/covid-19-future-of-aging-outlook-for-senior-housing-and-care/>

A closer look at the cancer that killed legendary guitarist Eddie Van Halen, who died earlier this month at age 65:

https://www.medpagetoday.com/blogs/celebritydiagnosis/89072?xid=nl_popmed_2020-10-15&eun=g1261622d0r&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=PopMedicine-Winner_101520&utm_content=Final&utm_term=NL_Gen_Int_PopMedicine_Active

The past week was National Aging-in-Place Week:

<https://www.ageinplace.org/About-Us/National-Aging-in-Place-Week#:~:text=America's%20seniors%20and%20senior%20service,October%2012%2D16%2C%202020.>

NEW FEATURE: Recipe of the Week

Selected with the help of OFA Nutrition Services Coordinator Nimesh Bhargava, we're aiming for nutritious meals that can be prepared simply, using ingredients widely available at most supermarkets. If you've got a good recipe, email ofa@dutchessny.gov and we'll give it a look-see.

Recipe #1: Pumpkin Oat Waffles - <https://foodandnutrition.org/blogs/stone-soup/pumpkin-oat-waffles/>

This week in senior birthdays:

10/17: Actor/comedian George Wendt (72)

10/18: NFL Hall-of-Famer Mike Ditka (81)

10/19: American ballerina Marjorie Tallchief (94)

10/20: Baseball Hall of Famer Juan Marichal (83)

10/21: Guitarist/songwriter Steve Cropper (79)

10/22: Actress/singer Catherine Deneuve (77)

10/23: Golfer Juan “Chi-Chi” Rodríguez (85)

And a Bad Joke to share with the grandkids:

Q: What animal is smarter than a talking parrot?

A: A spelling bee.