

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

## **AGING NEWS**

For the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>

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

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## **THIS IS FALLS PREVENTION WEEK**

When a senior injures themselves in a fall, it's personally costly for themselves in potential injury and death, as well as in reduced quality of life even after "less serious" falls. On top of that, falls are costly financially for all of us. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that in 2014, the most recent year for which they have data, falls cost New Yorkers almost \$3.8 billion – about half of that in Medicare spending, another \$950 million in Medicaid spending, and private/out-of-pocket costs approaching \$500 million.

According to the National Council on Aging, one in four Americans age 65 and older will experience a fall each year. That's a number that's far higher than it should be, especially since falls often lead to life-changing injury and death – and so many falls are preventable.

This week marks the beginning of fall, and as such it's National Falls Prevention Awareness Week. Locally, the Lower Hudson Valley Falls Prevention Network is holding a combination of virtual and socially-distanced events in Dutchess, Orange and Putnam Counties all week. A full schedule of events is available at [www.facebook.com/lhvfallprevention](http://www.facebook.com/lhvfallprevention).

On Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, as part of Falls Prevention Week, the Office for the Aging is hosting a socially-distanced Tai Chi event at Bowdoin Park (85 Sheafe Rd., Poughkeepsie). Masks will be required at the event, and advance registration is also required. Call the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555 to reserve your spot. Space is limited!

For those who have trouble accessing a recording or webinar throughout the week, call (828) 280-1193 or email [lhvfallprevention@gmail.com](mailto:lhvfallprevention@gmail.com).

## WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT FALLS?

Around your home there's plenty to do:

**Cleanliness = safety.** Keeping your home tidy has the added benefit of removing fall hazards. If you spill something oily or greasy, clean it up right away.

**Remove tripping hazards.** Go through your home room by room, looking for loose carpet, throw rugs, electrical cords running along the floor, and wood floorboards that stick up.

**Wear shoes or non-slip socks.** Socks may be easier on the feet, but they can also be a slipping hazard on smooth floors.

**Nonslip walking surfaces.** Floors that get wet in your bathroom, kitchen or porch can be major slipping risks. Nonslip mats will mitigate the risk, along with keeping floors dry whenever possible.

**Take your time.** Many people fall when they stand up from a sitting position too quickly.

The next two may require the assistance of a handyman or similar professional.

**Install handrails and grab bars.** The key places to install these are by toilets and bathtubs, and in stairways and halls.

**Check your lighting.** Night lights in bedrooms and bathrooms are key, especially if you need to use the bathroom at night. Many mobile phones have a flashlight feature – use it. Make sure stairways and halls are well-lit. Stairs should be lit with two-light fixtures at the top and bottom, so that there's still some lighting if one bulb goes out.

*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)*

#### **STILL TIME TO SIGN UP FOR BOWDOIN PARK TAI CHI (Thu 9/24)**

As noted above, there are still a few spaces left...just a few...for the socially-distanced Tai Chi class taking place at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at

Bowdoin Park (85 Sheafe Rd., Poughkeepsie). Reservations are required for the class, which is part of Fall Prevention Week, September 21st – 25th.

Locally, Mid-Hudson Fall Prevention Week is hosted by the Office for the Aging along with New York State Senator Sue Serino, Lower Hudson Valley Fall Prevention Network, and the Vassar Brothers Medical Center Trauma Department. [www.facebook.com/lhvfallprevention](http://www.facebook.com/lhvfallprevention) features a Fall Prevention Week calendar of events and more information. If you're not online, contact Jill Bubel, Trauma Injury Prevention Coordinator at Vassar Brothers, at (845) 797-6768.

### **“GOLDEN GATHERING” FILLING UP QUICKLY (Sat 10/3)**

The socially-distant adaptation of the annual Golden Gathering event hosted by the Office for the Aging and State Senator Sue Serino is proving to be as popular as traditional Golden Gatherings have been in the past. As of when this Aging News was published, the event was close to capacity. The Golden Gathering will take place in the parking lot of Arlington High School (1157 NY 55, LaGrangeville) from 9:30 to 12:30 on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Advance registration is required and can be done by calling (914) 962-2624 and leaving your contact information at the voice-mail prompt, before the event reaches capacity or September 28<sup>th</sup>, whichever comes first.

If you were able to attend an OFA Drive-Thru Senior Picnic over the summer, you'll be familiar with the drive-thru arrangement. Visiting seniors will be able to get a flu shot in their car, if they need one. They'll be able to pick up a healthy meal to go, plus key resource information from the Office for the Aging and others. OFA will have staff onsite at the drive-thrus to answer questions. Each participant will receive a free raffle card on entry, and winners will be picked upon the event's completion and contacted by phone to arrange a home drop-off for their prize.

**Other aging news online:**

On the aging immune system and its relationship to COVID-19:

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/how-the-aging-process-makes-older-people-more-vulnerable-to-covid-19#How-an-older-immune-system-reacts>

Untreated high blood pressure is becoming more common among Americans:

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2020-09-10/untreated-high-blood-pressure-a-growing-problem-among-americans>

With a few tips, it's becoming easier for seniors to determine the accuracy of news, including free online courses on what's real and what's fake:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/11/health/misinformation-social-media-elderly.html>

September is National Preparedness Month. Here are some key tips from Dutchess County Government (printable PDF):

[https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/Docs/HDBePrepared.pdf?fbclid=IwAR28B0oAk9GcwitHZSCGulv1ULrjBzmlv1w80z\\_Ni4Byi8Fo477XeOyZ9Y](https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/Docs/HDBePrepared.pdf?fbclid=IwAR28B0oAk9GcwitHZSCGulv1ULrjBzmlv1w80z_Ni4Byi8Fo477XeOyZ9Y)

This next one gets deep into the science pretty quickly, but the upshot is this – the National Institutes of Health is expanding an Alzheimer's disease study, to look for differences in brain aging between Mexican-Americans and non-latino whites:

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/nih-augments-large-scale-study-alzheimers-disease-biomarkers>

Legendary New York sports journalist Roger Angell turns 100 this week and is keeping himself busy: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/09/14/roger-angell-at-a-hundred>

**This week in senior birthdays:**

9/19: Journalist/author Roger Angell (100)

9/20: Actress/singer Sophia Loren (86)

9/21: Author/screenwriter Stephen King (73)

9/22: Brooklyn/LA Dodgers player/manager Tommy Lasorda (93)

9/23: Singer/songwriter Bruce Springsteen (71)

- With a new album due out in October:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Letter\\_to\\_You](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Letter_to_You)

9/24: NFL legend "Mean" Joe Greene (74)

9/25: Actor/producer Michael Douglas (76)

**And in conclusion, a Bad Joke:**

My spouse and I took up woodworking recently. The neighbors said “We didn’t know you were carpenters.”

I said, “We’ve only just begun.”