

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of August 12th

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

Todd N. Tancredi, Director

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

HOW TO BE RUDE (TO SCAMMERS)

As New Yorkers, you're probably familiar with our region's reputation for rudeness – but we prefer to think of it as the ability to tell people exactly what we think without wasting time.

We can use this reputation to our advantage.

We can think of some excellent opportunities to use “passive rudeness” as a force for good: specifically, to stop scammers from taking advantage of people, especially seniors.

When a scammer targets a senior, especially in a phone scam, they’re counting on the senior being polite and trusting, because that’s how people born in the 30’s, 40’s and 50’s were often raised, and it was customary to give a stranger an initial benefit of the doubt, and to offer help if needed.

Imagine yourself in this scenario: your phone rings, but caller ID indicates an unfamiliar number, although it may appear somewhat familiar because it shares your telephone exchange or area code.

Faking phone numbers (also known as “spoofing”) is a classic phone scammers’ trick, but it’s an excellent opportunity to try out some passive rudeness.

Dealing with this kind of scammer requires no special knowledge other than these three words:

Ignore the call.

Here’s why: Phone scammers’ automated calling operations can often tell the difference between a call that reaches voice mail or an answering machine, a

busy signal, and a call picked up by a human. Ignore the call, and the automation simply moves on to the next number – but pick up the phone, for any reason, and the scammers notice. Your number then runs the risk of ending up on a “suckers list,” which is a database of victims and potential victims shared by con artists worldwide.

Phone scammers’ other big trick is the fake emotional appeal, often left as a message on your phone: your grandchild is under arrest; the IRS is coming to get you; your Social Security account is in jeopardy. It’s all nonsense, of course. No legitimate government at any level settles such serious matters over the phone - but sophisticated scammers can be remarkably skilled at getting past our usual common sense. We know of at least one local senior who went to an Office for the Aging scam prevention presentation and was still victimized by a scammer pretending to be her grandson, because to her the scammer’s story seemed so plausible, and the scammer was ready with canned answers to her questions. She told the scammer he didn’t sound like her grandson. The scammer was ready with a tale of being injured during the arrest.

That incident is an example of why you can’t let yourself get sucked into the scammer’s world in the first place. Ignore the call.

If you're a member of a group that would like to know more about protecting yourselves, you can arrange a scam prevention presentation with OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones by calling the office at (845) 486-2555 or emailing bjones@dutchessny.gov.

There's also a Scam Prevention Resources page in the summer Spotlight on Seniors newsletter, available at libraries countywide while supplies last.

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

Office for the Aging events schedule

To find out more, see the events calendar at www.dutchessny.gov/aging

or call (845) 486-2555 (unless a different number is indicated)

(All events subject to change)

Thu 8/15, 11 a.m. – Hydrating in the Summer Months

With OFA nutrition coordinator Nimesh Bhargava

OFA Senior Friendship Center - City of Poughkeepsie

(845) 486-2564 for more information

Thu 8/29, 11 a.m. – Diabetes Awareness

With Ozie Williams, Public Health Nutrition Coordinator, Dutchess County

Department of Behavioral and Community Health

OFA Senior Friendship Center - City of Poughkeepsie

(845) 486-2564 for more information

Sat 9/28, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – The Golden Gathering

Presented by OFA and state senator Sue Serino

Arlington High School, 1157 NY 55, LaGrangeville

(845) 229-0106 for information

Vendor contact information to be announced

SIGN UP NOW FOR “A MATTER OF BALANCE” (starting September)

The latest session of “A Matter of Balance” falls prevention classes begins in September. Classes fill up quickly, so you’ll want to sign up quickly as well.

Each session lasts eight weeks, with classes held once a week at locations throughout Dutchess County. The evidence-based “A Matter of Balance” program is ideal for you, if you are a resident of Dutchess County, age 60 or more and ambulatory, and you’d like to maximize the likelihood that you’ll be able to live independently in your own home for as long as possible.

You can sign up for “A Matter of Balance” or get more information by calling the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555. Outside the 845 area code, our toll-free number is (866) 486-2555.

LaGRANGE/BEEKMAN PICNIC VOLUNTEERS WANTED (Wed 8/14)

This week's Senior Picnic, for seniors from the Towns of Beekman and LaGrange, is taking place at Freedom Park (212 Skidmore Rd.) on Wednesday, August 14th. If you are available to help at the picnic, email bjones@dutchessny.gov.

This week in senior birthdays:

8/12: Actor George Hamilton (80)

8/13: World Trade Center tightrope-walker Philippe Petit (70)

8/14: Actor/comedian/writer/musician Steve Martin (74)

8/15: US Supreme Court associate justice Stephen Breyer (81)

8/16: Actress/dancer Julie Newmar (86)

8/17: Actor/director Robert De Niro (76)

8/18: 41st First Lady Rosalynn Carter (92)

OFA's Outreach Coordinator, Brian Jones, has been on vacation for the past week, but he left behind some travel-related Bad Jokes to wrap up matters neatly:

Q: What U.S. state is famous for extra small soft drinks?

A: Minnesota.

Q: Where do sheep go on vacation?

A: The Baaaaaaaaaaaaa-hamas.

Q: Why doesn't the elephant take a suitcase on vacation?

A: He already has a trunk.