

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

**AGING NEWS**

For the week of December 9<sup>th</sup>

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

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

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

**WILL YOUR EYES HAVE IT?**

It's not surprising that we don't have the same eyesight as a senior than we did when we were teenagers. Seniors' eyes are slower to react to changes in light. Here's one example: a 15-year-old typically needs one second for their eyes to recover from glare from lights, but for a 65-year-old that recovery time can last up to nine seconds. That's because the muscles in your eyes' irises, which control the size of our pupils, become less responsive as we age.

Cataracts, the clouding of your eyes' lenses, are common in seniors. By age 80, fully half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had surgery to correct a cataract.

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of legal blindness among those over age 55 throughout the developed world, according to Harvard Women's Health Watch. Another leading cause of seniors' vision loss is glaucoma, the damage to the optic nerve that's often caused by abnormally high pressure within the eyeball.

It all adds up to aging eyes being increasingly problematic for seniors hoping to stay independent, especially when driving at night. Even seniors with favorable test results from an eye exam in a doctor's office can still have problems with nighttime driving, because more complex tasks are required when driving as opposed to reading an eye chart.

Is your eyesight still acceptable for night time driving? Only your eye doctor can say with any accuracy, so be sure to stay current with your checkups.

**WHEN IT COMES TO LIGHTING, LOCATION IS EVERYTHING**

A car's high beams and fog lights are designed to help improve night time driving, but not when the lights are on somebody else's car and they're pointed at you. The glare from those lights can seriously disturb a driver's field of vision.

Reducing glare's effects is something that can be done before you start the car. Make sure both outside mirrors are properly adjusted, along with the rearview mirror. On most cars, rearview mirrors have a small lever at the bottom that enables a driver to switch to a "night" setting. This will help in those situations when you're being followed by a car using its bright headlights.

If you're worried that the glare from an oncoming vehicle will affect your eyes, turn your head slightly to the right, and follow the white line on the side of the road until the other vehicle passes by. If there's no white line on the side of the road, try to follow the line where the pavement meets the shoulder.

### **WHEN THE NIGHT TIME ISN'T THE RIGHT TIME**

Improvements in eyewear technology have made some aspects of night driving easier for seniors, but the Harvard researchers we cited earlier say that aside from cataract surgery, there's no medical intervention that can improve

night vision, let alone return it to what it was in our teens. The day may come when basic safety requires a senior to stick to driving during daylight hours.

***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)***

### **Office for the Aging events schedule**

To find out more, see the events calendar at [www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging)

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

**(All events subject to change)**

**Mon 12/16, 11:00 a.m. – Healthy Holiday Cooking and Eating**

With OFA nutrition coordinator Nimesh Bhargava

Pawling Senior Friendship Center, 154 Charles Colman Blvd.

**Tue 12/17, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Free OFA Open House and Holiday Lunch**

**(Reservations required – space extremely limited)**

Poughkeepsie Senior Friendship Center, 114 Delafield St.

Call (845) 486-2555 to reserve your seat

**Thu 12/19, 11:00 a.m. – Avoiding Holiday Weight Gain**

With OFA nutrition coordinator Nimesh Bhargava

Poughkeepsie Senior Friendship Center, 114 Delafield St.

## **OFFICE FOR THE AGING CLERICAL VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

**(Week of December 9-13)**

You can help your fellow seniors and caregivers stay informed on issues of importance to them, by helping the Office for the Aging prepare the new Winter 2019-2020 edition of our “Spotlight on Seniors” newsletter for mailing.

If you can be at our office at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie at any time during business hours, any day (or days) during the week of December 9-13,

please email OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones at [bjones@dutchessny.gov](mailto:bjones@dutchessny.gov) and let him know you're available to help. Thanks!

### **WINTER "SAGE TABLE" FOR LGBTQ SENIORS (Wed 12/11)**

SAGE Table is a free intergenerational meal where LGBTQ and allied people of all ages break bread and strengthen community ties. The next SAGE Table will take place on Wednesday, December 11th, 6-8 p.m. at the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Center in Kingston (300 Wall St., Uptown, [www.lgbtqcenter.org](http://www.lgbtqcenter.org), (845) 331-5300).

RSVP's are strongly encouraged, either by calling, or emailing

[f.brenner@lgbtqcenter.org](mailto:f.brenner@lgbtqcenter.org).

### **Other aging news online:**

Ever heard of "mixed" dementia? [https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-mixed-dementia-causes-and-diagnosis?utm\\_source=NIA+Main&utm\\_campaign=9b3845d39b-](https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-mixed-dementia-causes-and-diagnosis?utm_source=NIA+Main&utm_campaign=9b3845d39b-)

[20191203\\_ADEARmixeddementia&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_ffe42fdac3-9b3845d39b-7728681](https://www.ada.gov/20191203_ADEARmixeddementia&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ffe42fdac3-9b3845d39b-7728681)

Starting in early 2020, Social Security is making plans to expand Wednesday operating hours at its field offices: [https://blog.ssa.gov/expanding-social-security-field-office-hours/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://blog.ssa.gov/expanding-social-security-field-office-hours/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

Artificial neurons – a promising breakthrough, but still in the very early stages of testing and exploration: [https://techxplore.com/news/2019-12-world-artificial-neurons-chronic-diseases.html?fbclid=IwAR2Wn41QpJG-mLOxE6NQRLPY\\_Ic6Wt4czO3iAnafiAw3ZrAjWqQN-ma8nNM](https://techxplore.com/news/2019-12-world-artificial-neurons-chronic-diseases.html?fbclid=IwAR2Wn41QpJG-mLOxE6NQRLPY_Ic6Wt4czO3iAnafiAw3ZrAjWqQN-ma8nNM)

It's never too late to take steps to improve your health. This week's example, Willie Nelson: <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2019/11/28/willie-nelson-says-hes-no-longer-smoking-marijuana-due-to-breathing-issues/>

Speaking of music...you're never too old to start a musical career. That's what this songwriting duo (age 88 and 102) are saying:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/12/02/these-two-men-just-released-their-first-music-album-age/>

**This week in senior birthdays:**

12/9: Actor/producer Kirk Douglas (103)

12/10: Actress Susan Dey (68)

12/11: Actress/singer/dancer Rita Moreno (89)

12/12: Game show host/animal advocate Bob Barker (97)

12/13: Actor/singer/dancer Dick Van Dyke (94)

12/14: Tennis player Stan Smith (74)

12/15: Physicist/mathematician Freeman Dyson (97)

Oldest living New York Yankee (and oldest living MLB player) Eddie  
Robinson (99)

**Time to get in a winter Bad Joke state of mind:**

What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party?

"Freeze a Jolly Good Fellow."