

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of June 17th

Note: the Office for the Aging and its Senior Friendship Centers will be closed for Independence Day on Thursday, July 4th. Clients of the OFA Home Delivered Meals program will receive shelf-stable meals for Thursday, July 4th and Friday, July 5th.

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

Todd N. Tancredi, Director

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

BALANCING SENIORS' FREEDOM WITH DRIVER SAFETY

In a largely car-dependent area like Dutchess County, the ability to drive a car is more than a symbol of independence, especially for seniors. It allows

seniors to maintain social and family connections, get to medical appointments, shopping, dining, volunteer work and paid employment. It's a lifeline, and not to be given up lightly.

But are you as a senior, or your senior loved ones, still driving safely?

First, the good news: crash statistics from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety show that seniors' crash rates peaked during the 1990s and have been declining since then. What's been causing this welcome decline in crashes is up for debate. It's possible that modern seniors could be more cautious behind the wheel, while at the same time technological safety advances like rear-view cameras could be especially beneficial for seniors.

In Dutchess County, Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck has been operating a Driver Rehabilitation program for the past year, to help senior drivers and drivers with medical challenges stay independent. It's a three-part program:

- A physical evaluation of the driver;
- An observation of the person's driving;
- Therapy, as needed, to improve driving abilities.

In the first step, an occupational therapist with specialized training evaluates the mental and physical condition of the driver, at the NDH campus in

Rhinebeck. The evaluation includes a review of strength and coordination, brake reaction time, vision, perceptual processing skills, problem-solving abilities and safety awareness. Next, the driver takes the program's vehicle – a 2018 Toyota Camry – for a trip on local roads, with their driving capabilities being measured. The therapist can assess the driver's ability to operate the car, interact safely with others, and demonstrate knowledge of traffic rules and regulations.

The evaluation will cover a recommended level of driving independence and whether any driving restrictions are needed. For example, a driver may need occupational therapy for better grip of the steering wheel. For some drivers, adaptive equipment may be necessary. This could include special hand controls; a steering wheel spinner; a left-foot accelerator; wider mirrors; pedal extenders; or assistance with the driver's seat position.

The therapist's evaluation is reported to the medical provider who referred the driver for the evaluation. With the driver's permission, the evaluation may also be shared with family members.

Evaluation results are **not** reported to the state Department of Motor Vehicles by the therapist.

NDH only works with licensed drivers and is not a driving school. To learn more, contact the hospital's Driver Rehabilitation department at 845-871-4380 (TTY: 800-421-1220), or visit www.healthquest.org/driverrehabilitation.

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

See the online calendar at www.dutchessny.gov to find out more

(All events subject to change)

Thu 6/20, 1 p.m. – OFA Scam Prevention Presentation

With OFA outreach coordinator Brian Jones

St. Joseph's Church Parish Hall, 15 North Ave., Millbrook

Thu 7/25, 1 p.m. – OFA Scam Prevention Presentation

With OFA outreach coordinator Brian Jones

Arbor Ridge, 11 Mountain Laurel Lane, Rhinebeck

TIVOLI-AREA PICNIC VOLUNTEERS WANTED (Wed 6/19)

This week's Senior Picnic, for residents of Milan, Rhinebeck/Rhinecliff, and Red Hook/Tivoli is taking place at Memorial Park in Tivoli on Wednesday, June 19th – and if you'd like to volunteer to help your senior friends and neighbors enjoy the day, please get in touch with OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones at bjones@dutchessny.gov or (845) 486-2555.

This is the fourth picnic of 12 on the schedule, which is available at www.dutchessny.gov/seniorpicnic.

FUNDS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST SENIOR CITIZENS WITH HOME REPAIRS

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro has announced the availability of funding to help senior citizens complete minor to moderate rehabilitation on their homes through the County's Senior Rehab Program.

The program is administered by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. It provides zero-percent loans and deferred payment loans up to \$20,000 to income eligible senior citizens. Loans are repaid through a monthly payment, while deferred payment loans have no monthly payment and are repaid when the homeowner leaves or sells the property. Households making between 0-50% of the county median receive deferred payment loans, and households making between 50-80% of the county median receive zero percent interest loans.

Eligible applicants must be 62 years of age or older at the time of application. They must be named on the deed as an owner, and their total household income must be below the following maximums:

<i>Family Size</i>	<i>Income Limit</i>
1	\$52,850
2	\$60,400
3	\$67,950
4	\$75,500

Other parties may be named on the deed, as long as the applicant is also one of the owners. Life tenants, properties owned by trusts, and properties with reverse mortgages are ineligible. Applicants must show the property is their principal residence. Eligible repairs include minor to moderate rehabilitation necessary to alleviate building code violations. The focus of the program is repairs to "major systems" such as roofs, furnaces, decks/porches, structural problems, handicapped accessibility, electrical, and plumbing. Properties with necessary repairs that substantially exceed \$20,000 will not be eligible for assistance. The property must have a minimum of \$1,000 in repairs. Routine maintenance, such as cleaning gutters and painting, is ineligible.

Eligible properties include single-family detached properties. Additionally, the federal funding source for this program limits assistance to "modest" homes. In Dutchess County, a home must be valued at or below \$253,000 for 2019 to be eligible for the program; this limit is established annually by the federal government. Generally, the County can use the "full market value" listed on a homeowner's most current property tax bill to determine this value. Mobile homes, condominiums and townhouses are not eligible for the program.

Eligible properties may be located in any Dutchess County municipality except the City of Poughkeepsie, which has its own Community Development Block Grant allocation.

Guidelines and applications are available by contacting the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, 85 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 107, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 at (845) 486-3600 or at the County's website, www.dutchessny.gov.

FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS IN POUGHKEEPSIE (Fri 6/21)

The United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region (www.uwdor.org) is providing free community health screenings on Friday, June 21st from noon to 4 p.m. at the Family Partnership Center, 29 N. Hamilton St., Poughkeepsie.

Childcare will be provided for free, along with food, Narcan kits, a bike/helmet raffle and other community resources.

Advance registration is required at www.uwdor.org/register-healthscreening.

Questions? Call (845) 471-1900 x3106 or email cnicoletti@uwdor.org.

Presented in partnership with Hudson River Healthcare Community Health and the New York State Department of Health.

Other aging news online:

(audio) OFA outreach coordinator Brian Jones was a guest last week on the Planet Seniors program, which airs Monday nights at 8 p.m. on Radio Kingston (1490 AM/107.9 FM and www.radiokingston.org). The over-the-air signals reach most of Hyde Park, Red Hook, Milan and Rhinebeck; the internet feed reaches everywhere else.

Here's the link: <https://radiokingston.org/en/broadcast/planet-seniors/episodes/brian-jones-outreach-coordinator-for-the-dutchess-co-office-for-the-aging>. Brian's segment runs from about the 7-minute mark until about the 30-minute mark. We've been invited back for future shows.

A plumbing contractor from Poughkeepsie is facing charges in Connecticut for various alleged violations of that state's contracting laws:

<https://dailyvoice.com/new-york/eastdutchess/police-fire/contractor-from-dutchess-charged-with-scamming-customers-police-say/769874/>

Remember to do your homework before hiring any kind of contractor. The Office for the Aging provides scam-prevention presentations for seniors groups and other civic organizations. Find out more by emailing bjones@dutchessny.gov.

Chronic insomnia can be deadly:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/well/mind/insomnia-can-kill-you.html>

This week in senior birthdays:

6/17: Singer/songwriter Barry Manilow (76)

6/18: Singer/songwriter Paul McCartney (77)

6/19: Author/academic Salman Rushdie (72)

6/20: Singer/songwriter Brian Wilson (77)

6/21: Electrical engineer Josephine Webb (101)

6/22: Singer/songwriter/actor Kris Kristofferson (83)

6/23: US Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas (71)

And our Bad Joke to conclude matters:

Q: What goes down but doesn't come back up?

A: A yo.