

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of April 22nd

CHANGING ATTITUDES ON SOCIAL ISOLATION

If you're a recent arrival in Dutchess County from busier areas downstate, you may be puzzled to see this scenario: a pickup truck driven on a rural road by an older man slows down and stops, as the driver recognizes an old friend approaching in his own pickup coming in the opposite direction.

"How's the fishing?"

"Not bad up my way. You?"

Or it's two older women stopping to chat at the supermarket. They might not even know each other but they're having a conversation because they recognize a kindred spirit. After a while they realize you're trying to get past them to get a box of ziti, and they strike up a conversation with you as well.

What is all this idle chit-chat?

It's not idle, we're learning. These people have an instinct for the value of

social connections.

At the Office for the Aging, we're just starting to learn the value of social connectedness, even though seemingly mundane conversations about the weather. The isolation of those older people who couldn't get to the grocery store or their fishing spot was seen as just an unfortunate byproduct of getting older. Can't do anything about it, we may have assumed, incorrectly.

We can all help reduce social isolation and the negative health impacts that come with it. Regular readers know about OFA's fast-growing "Friendly Calls" program that's been connecting volunteer callers with Dutchess County older adults at risk of loneliness. As the program grows, we've invited Friendly Calls participants not only to receive calls, but to become volunteers themselves.

"Friendly Calls" is open to all prospective volunteers over age 18. If you're just beginning to explore volunteering but don't want to overcommit, "Friendly Calls" is ideal. The orientation takes less than an hour, and the once-a-week calls to participants last 20-30 minutes.

Every participant in the program has agreed to accept calls; and before a "Friendly Calls" session can begin, the volunteer and participant agree on what time and day of the week the calls will be made.

To find out more, visit www.dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls, email ledgar@dutchessny.gov, or call OFA at 845-486-2555.

SCAMMERS CHASE HEADLINES AGAIN

This time it's borrowers trying to avoid high mortgage rates who are falling victim to scammers. The Financial Times (FT) cites banks and regulators worldwide reporting that scammers have been posing as lenders offering rates that seem to be too good to be true, in exchange for an upfront payment – which disappears once the victim's check clears.

The Federal Trade Commission reports nearly 26,000 cases of advance-fee scams last year in the U.S., down from 2022 losses but still far higher than before interest rates started rising.

It's illegal under U.S. law for a business that's not a licensed vendor to take a mortgage application fee, according to Jason Zirkle of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners in FT. Once again, though, scammers count on their targeted victims not doing the necessary homework.

For a printable list of scam prevention resources, visit www.dutchessny.gov/aging.

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

BECOME A VOLUNTEER OFA HEALTH INSURANCE COUNSELOR

(Orientation this week! Thu 4/25, 10am)

The Office for the Aging's Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) is looking for dedicated counselors to help guide Dutchess County older adults through the sometimes-stressful process of making good health insurance and Medicare choices.

OFA is hosting a HIICAP Volunteer Orientation event at our Poughkeepsie headquarters (114 Delafield St.) at 10 am on Thursday, April 25th.

Because health insurance and Medicare issues can be complex, the HIICAP program involves ongoing volunteer trainings, so counselors remain current on insurance-related issues.

Let us know you can come to a HIICAP volunteering orientation by emailing jcarey@dutchessny.gov or calling 845-486-2555.

SIGN UP FOR THE CAREGIVER CONFERENCE (Wed 5/8)

Do you care for an aging loved one? You don't have to go it alone, and next month there's an opportunity for caregivers to pick up valuable knowledge to help them be the best they can be, both for themselves and the older adult receiving the care.

The 18th annual free Conference on Caregiving is taking place on Wednesday, May 8th from 8:30 am to 2 pm, at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center on the grounds of the FDR historic site on Route 9 in Hyde Park. Topics will include advance directives, your "wellness wheel," funeral planning, scams, and qualifying for Medicaid.

A continental breakfast and lunch are provided, but registration for the conference is required. Registration for the conference is now open – as of April 19th, the event was over halfway to capacity. Call the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 to reserve your seat.

The Caregiver Conference is organized by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging with the Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter, Parkinson's Disease Support Group of the Mid-Hudson Valley, Hudson Valley Hospice, and

community members Cathy Regan and Falisia Cotten-Swain.

SAVE THE DATE - OFA AT VETERAN APPRECIATION EVENT IN JUNE

Join Mental Health America of Dutchess County, the Dutchess County Division of Veterans Services, the Dutchess County Office for the Aging and many other local organizations serving veterans for a free Veteran Appreciation Event, on Friday, June 7th, 2024 from 11am to 3pm at American Legion Post 1302, 55 Overlook Rd. in Poughkeepsie.

Services will include VA disability, housing, education and employment assistance, mental health services, community resources, food and clothing, grab bags and much more.

For more information, call 845-473-2500 extension 1346 or email jhoresky@mhadutchess.org.

AARP SHRED EVENT IN HYDE PARK (Thu 4/25)

Protect yourself from identity theft, deed theft, and other scams by joining AARP NY for a free paper shredding event in Hyde Park this coming week.

On Thursday, April 25th, AARP will host a free paper shredding event with an on-site shred truck in Hyde Park at the United Methodist Church at 1 Church Street from 10am to 1pm. [Register at this link](#), while space is available. You will be asked to choose a 1/2 hour window during the registration process.

Event ends at scheduled time or when the truck is full, whichever comes first. There is a three bag or box limit per participant. Paper only, please. Metal binder clips should be removed in advance. Boxes will be emptied and returned to participants.

OFA “FRIENDLY CALLS” ORIENTATIONS

Most orientations for prospective [OFA “Friendly Calls” program](#) volunteers take place at OFA unless otherwise indicated below. Orientations typically last 40-60 minutes. Pick one, and contact OFA at 845-486-2555 to set up your orientation:

- **Monday, April 22nd, 10 am**
- **Wednesday, April 24th, 1:30 pm**
- **Wednesday, May 1st, 10 am**
- **Friday, May 3rd, 3 pm**

- **Monday, May 6th**, 3 pm
- **Thursday, May 9th**, 10 am

To register for any orientation, if you have more questions about “Friendly Calls,” or to arrange an on-site orientation for your civic organization, call 845-486-2555 or email Friendly Calls program manager Linda Edgar at ledgar@dutchessny.gov.

We add orientation dates continually. Check dutchessny.gov/calendar for the latest list, and see dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls for details on the program.

“HEAP” COOLING NEWS AND EMERGENCY “HEAP” EXTENSION

The state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) announced this month that the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) emergency benefit component will be extended to August 30th, or until funding runs out, whichever comes first. The regular HEAP benefit closed as of April 12th.

The HEAP cooling component is now open for applications, and will close on Friday, August 30th, unless funding for the program is exhausted before that.

For information on HEAP for older adults in Dutchess County, contact OFA at 845-486-2555, email ofa@dutchessny.gov, or visit dutchessny.gov/ofaheap.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY (Saturday 4/27)

The Southern Dutchess Community Coalition in collaboration with the Beacon Police Department are hosting a Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, April 27th, from 10 am to 2 pm, at the City of Beacon Recreation Center (23 W. Cedar St.).

For more information, contact SDCC Coordinator Michele Franks at sdcc@capedc.org or 845-765-8301 extension 116.

Can't make it that day? There are 12 drop boxes at area law enforcement facilities, many of which are available 24/7. For more information, [click this link from Dutchess County STOP-DWI](#). And of course, safe prescription drug disposal is available at every OFA Summer Picnic. A save-the-date schedule is available at dutchessny.gov/OFApicnics. Picnic reservations will open in May.

Other news:

What to know when [your doctor prescribes you a new medication](#), or you start taking new over-the-counter medicine.

More concerns have been raised about [the use of antipsychotics for individuals with dementia](#).

The new world's oldest living man is 111-year-old John Alfred Tinniswood of Merseyside in northwest England (near Liverpool). And his secret to long life is...moderation, a bit of luck, and [fish and chips](#) on Fridays.

This week's birthdays:

4/19: Former Mets pitcher [Frank Viola](#) (64)

4/20: Actor/activist [George Takei](#) (87)

4/21: Singer/songwriter/actor [Iggy Pop](#) (77)

4/22: Singer/songwriter/guitarist [Peter Frampton](#) (74)

4/23: Actor [Lee Majors](#) (85)

4/24: Singer/actress [Barbra Streisand](#) (85)

4/25: Actor/director [Al Pacino](#) (84)

And our weekly Bad Joke!

I'm writing a book about all the things I should do with my life. It's an
oughttobiography.