

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

## **AGING NEWS**

For the week of August 12<sup>th</sup>

### **DON'T MISS OUT ON YOUR BENEFITS**

There are a host of benefits programs that older adults don't apply for, even though they're qualified and need only apply to get what they're entitled to.

A recent estimate by the National Council on Aging estimates that older Americans leave \$30 billion in benefits on the table every year because they either don't know about the programs, or don't know how to apply.

OFA can help you or someone you care for get the benefits you've paid for with your tax dollars. Just get in touch with us at 845-486-2555. Call during business hours and be ready, because a real live friendly, helpful OFA employee will pick up the phone.

We've all been caught on customer service hold and heard the phrase "Your call is important to us." At OFA, we figured "If the call is that important, somebody should pick up the phone, right?"

So that's what we do. We've heard that human customer service is an old-fashioned practice, but maybe it'll catch on again.

If you'd rather use email but don't know how to connect with the resources you're seeking, get started by reaching out to us at [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov).

For older adults who feel most comfortable communicating in a language other than English, OFA can arrange for Language Line services. As a recipient of federal funds, OFA is required by law to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities for our limited English proficient (LEP) persons, and patients, and clients. Contact OFA at [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov) or 845-486-2555 for more information on Language Line services.

Let's take an opportunity to address other common objections to applying for benefits.

*Ugh, the paperwork. I always mess it up.* OFA hears you. We can be an older adult's guide through the sometimes-daunting process of applying for benefits.

*I'd rather the benefit went to somebody more deserving than me.* A noble sentiment: But as a rule, when a benefit isn't claimed, it goes unused.

*They denied me last time I applied.* Don't give up. There's an appeals process. OFA can help you with it.

*I don't need the benefit.* In the short term you may be right, but what about five or ten years from now? Here's a recent anecdote from one of OFA's Community Benefits Specialists and a client of theirs:

When first we met with the client some years ago to help with paperwork, she was adamant about wanting to stay in her home for the rest of her life, as most of us would prefer. We advised her to fill out an application for senior housing in Dutchess County, just in case, because waiting lists for senior housing can be years long. Skip ahead a few years, and we heard back from the client, now a happy resident of that same senior housing complex she'd been skeptical about.

Applying "just in case" had paid off.

***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) Social media:***

***[www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA](http://www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA)***

## **UPCOMING “FRIENDLY CALLS” ORIENTATIONS**

If you’d like to learn more about the Friendly Calls program where volunteers are connected with older adults in Dutchess County who are at risk of social isolation, you can use this link: [www.dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls](http://www.dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls), AND you can sign up as a volunteer to take part in one of the upcoming Friendly Calls orientations here at OFA headquarters in Poughkeepsie (114 Delafield St.):

Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am

Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup> – 3:00 pm

For details, contact OFA Friendly Calls Outreach Coordinator Linda Edgar at [ledgar@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ledgar@dutchessny.gov) or call OFA at 845-486-2555.

## **“REBUILDING TOGETHER” APPLICATION WINDOW OPEN THRU SEPTEMBER 30**

Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley (RTHV, formerly Rebuilding Together Dutchess County) is accepting applications for their Rebuilding Day home repair

and accessibility modification program. These services are provided at **no-cost** to qualified homeowners and focus on ensuring that individuals can live independently in safe, warm, dry, and healthy homes.

**The deadline for applications to be considered for the 2025 Rebuilding Day program is September 30th, 2024.** Qualified Dutchess and Ulster County homeowners are encouraged to apply.

Typical repairs can include replacing a roof, windows, addressing electrical or plumbing issues, fixing a porch, installing a ramp, bathroom accessibility modifications, and much more. These repairs help to ensure that homeowners can now remain in their home.

To request an application or inquire about RTHV programs please call the RTHV office at 845-454-7310. The application and further details can also be found at [RebuildingTogetherHV.org](https://RebuildingTogetherHV.org).

**Other news:**

(podcast) [What makes us age?](#)

The science gets thick in this next article, but doing our best to translate into layman's terms, [scientists in St. Louis have come up with a biopsy-free way to examine brain neurons](#) for signs of dementia.

[Older adults are often the least prepared for disasters](#), according to the American Psychological Association.

Here it is again: [a diet low in sugar may slow the signs of aging](#).

**This week's birthdays:**

8/9: Actor/producer [Sam Elliott](#) (80)

8/10: Musician/songwriter [Ian Anderson](#) (Jethro Tull) (77)

8/11: Singer/songwriter [Joe Jackson](#) (70)

8/12: Rapper/producer [Sir Mix-a-Lot](#) (61)

8/13: World Trade Center tightrope-walker [Philippe Petit](#) (75)

8/14: Actor/comedian/writer/musician [Steve Martin](#) (79)

8/15: [Princess Anne](#) of Great Britain (74)

**And a Bad Joke:**

I wondered why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger. Then it hit me.