

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of December 23

OFA offices and Friendship Centers will be closed on Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25th; and New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1st. All offices and Friendship Centers are open regular weekday hours otherwise.

Golden Living . . . News for Older Adults, Their Families and Caregivers

Todd N. Tancredi, Director

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

OFA'S GOALS FOR 2025 – AND YOURS

The Dutchess County budget for 2025 is a promising one, when it comes to services for Dutchess County's older adults and caregivers. Visit **dutchessny.gov/budget2025** to look at the whole package.

Some key improvements for Dutchess County's older adults:

- Mobile OFA office hours, to bring a wide range of in-person OFA services closer to older adults in their home towns;
- Enhancing OFA Friendship Centers for expanded activities and engagement;
- Influenza and/or COVID vaccinations for homebound older adults, now underway through Friday, January 31st. Email ofa@dutchessny.gov or call **845-486-2555** during business hours to learn more.
- Expansion of OFA's successful "GoGo Grandparent" program. (More in OFA Director Todd Tancredi's message, later in this newsletter.)

Until then, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season and all the best for 2025!

***Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging,
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Social media: www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA

A MESSAGE FROM OFA DIRECTOR TODD TANCREDI

This time a year ago, we were just getting our pilot "GoGoGrandparent" transportation program off the ground, to address the growing need for non-emergency medical transportation for older adults in Dutchess County who don't qualify for such transportation via Medicaid, and have no other means of transportation.

We expected plenty of demand for GoGo, and we got it. Our county legislature and County Executive Sue Serino took notice, and saw to it that GoGo funding was expanded for 2025.

If this is the first time you're reading about GoGo, let's review.

GoGo operates anywhere Uber or Lyft drivers operate in Dutchess County. For users who register with GoGo through OFA, a limited number of free rides are available, within Dutchess County to:

- non-emergency medical appointments, for older adults who don't qualify for Medicaid; and
- trips to visit loved ones in hospitals, hospice, or nursing homes, regardless of Medicaid status.

As your next appointment approaches, contact OFA to register for GoGo, to ensure the availability of a driver and a free ride at the time and date you need. There may be additional transportation options that also meet your needs; contact OFA to find out about those as well.

(Registering with OFA is a MUST for any free rides to take place.)

“FRIENDLY CALLS” DECEMBER/JANUARY VOLUNTEER ORIENTATIONS

With OFA’s “Friendly Calls” program, you can choose to make phone calls to older adults at risk of social isolation, or you can choose to receive calls - or you can do both. For those of you who haven’t volunteered before and are exploring your possibilities, “Friendly Calls” can be ideal. A typical "Friendly Calls" series takes place once a week, for 20-30 minutes a call, for eight weeks. “Friendly Calls” volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

Those who wish to receive calls must be Dutchess County residents at least 60 years of age.

Upcoming “Friendly Calls” orientations at OFA headquarters at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie are scheduled as follows:

Monday 12/30, 1:30pm

Tuesday 1/7/25, 10:00am

Monday 1/13/25, 1:30pm

Tuesday 1/21/25, 10:00am

Monday 1/27/25, 1:30pm

To schedule your orientation – they last about an hour – here at our Poughkeepsie office, call 845-486-2555 during business hours, or email ledgar@dutchessny.gov.

OFA HOMEBOUND VACCINATION PROGRAM - NOW THROUGH JAN. 31

Are you a homebound older Dutchess County resident, or the caregiver for one?

If the homebound individual in question is unable to get a COVID booster and/or influenza vaccine through traditional channels due to their condition, OFA can help. Our staff can arrange for in-home vaccinations, while supplies last, through Friday, January 31st, 2025.

Contact OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555 or ofa@dutchessny.gov to find out more.

For the purposes of this program, “homebound” is defined as an individual who is unable to leave home due to physical limitations, cognitive impairment, other chronic conditions, a lack of transportation, visual impairments, and without caregivers available to get the individual in question to a vaccination provider in person.

MORE SCAM WARNINGS FROM DUTCHESS SHERIFF’S OFFICE...

The Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office would like to take this opportunity to warn the residents of Dutchess County and surrounding areas about scams that once again seem to be on the rise.

Scams are ways in which criminals will attempt to get money from people by contacting them and making up elaborate stories. In some cases

the perpetrators have tried, sometimes successfully, to use the victim's emotions about a loved one in trouble to get money. It's common for the perpetrators of these scams to try to get money by telling people that one of their relatives has been seriously hurt or is in jail, and that they need money right away. In many cases they will pose as a law enforcement official or another relative to try and convince the victim that it's legitimate.

Lately there have been two (2) major scams circulating. In the first scam victims receive an email notification from Microsoft claiming that their computer has been hacked and to contact a call center to remedy this. The victims contact a fake call center, at which time they are told to provide gift card serial numbers and allow the perpetrators remote access to their computer. The perpetrators steal the gift cards via the serial numbers, and then once they have remote computer access they use it to steal money from the victim's accounts. As if this wasn't enough the victims are contacted yet again from someone now posing as law enforcement – in some cases the "Secret Service" or the "Sheriff" – who informs them that child pornography has been found on their computer and there's a warrant for their arrest, but they can satisfy the warrant by paying money. The victims are instructed to not tell anyone about being contacted, and when impersonating law

enforcement the suspects will utilize “spoofed” caller ID identifiers and use specific law enforcement agency names that appear to be generated from a legitimate agency.

The second scam is similar to the first one in which the perpetrators tell the victim that there’s child pornography on their computer, but instead of asking for money they instruct the victim to buy gold coins and bars. Once the victim has the gold they are instructed to send a picture of it to the perpetrators, and after that the victim is told to meet with a courier to give them the gold. The gold is never seen again, and in one case the victim lost over \$250,000 as a result of this scam.

The Sheriff’s Office would like to offer the following tips to help people avoid these scams:

- If you receive correspondence from someone that you don’t know asking for money but instructing you to keep the matter confidential and not inform anyone about it, it’s most likely a scam.
- Legitimate law enforcement would not attempt to satisfy a warrant or make promises to avoid prosecution by soliciting money.

- If you receive an email about an order you didn't place or asking you to send money call the company using a legitimate number. DO NOT follow the instructions in the email, click on any links in the email, or call the number provided in the email.
- If someone asks you to purchase merchandise, transfer money, provide bank information, provide remote computer access or enter a code given to you by them use caution as it is likely a scam.
- Do not meet up with someone that you don't know; if you're asked to do this it is surely a scam, and it is very dangerous as well.
- If you're contacted by someone you don't know asking for money, for any reason, that's a signal that it's most likely a scam.
- If someone calls you and tells you that a relative has been hurt or is in jail, confirm it first before sending any money. Call other relatives or a legitimate law enforcement agency for confirmation before any money is sent. If they're posing as a relative, try and contact that relative for confirmation.
- Sending money overseas is especially risky; use extreme caution.

- If the person is telling you that a loved one is in the hospital or jail, find out which one and contact the institution yourself to confirm.
- If a loved one has recently passed away be wary; in some cases perpetrators have even preyed on victims by searching through the obituaries and calling surviving loved ones. If you get calls from people you don't know soon after someone passes away, be careful and confirm it before you send any money.
- In some cases someone will call and tell the victim that they've won money, but to "process the claim" they need to first send money. Beware this is most definitely a scam and don't send any money – you should never have to pay money to claim a prize. If it seems too good to be true, it most likely is.
- If there's any doubt about a phone call/email/letter you've received contact the Sheriff's Office before sending any money.
- Scams tend to increase during the holiday season, so be especially alert for them during those times.

It is very important to not send any money to anyone that you don't know until you've confirmed the situation through an independent source and feel

comfortable with it. If it's a scam once the money is sent it's very difficult, and most times impossible, to get it back. If anyone thinks they may have been the victim of a scam they are encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at 845-486-3800 or via the tipline at 845-605-CLUE or dcso tips@gmail.com.

Follow the Sheriff's Office on Facebook at

facebook.com/DutchessCountySheriffsOffice

For a printable Scam Prevention Resources flyer, visit

dutchessny.gov/scamprevention

Other news:

On [navigating the holidays as a caregiver](#) of a person with dementia.

[More winter caregiving tips here](#). And [caregiving worksheets](#).

[Some aging cells help heal our bodies](#).

The incidence of dementia has been [linked to inflammatory foods](#), like...if you can't make it at home, you should probably go easy on it. [Like corn chips](#).

Buying something powered by cheap batteries? [Skip the no-name brands](#), especially if the batteries are lithium-ion. It's a worldwide issue, as this article from Australia indicates. Stick to well-known major brands.

Why are some deciduous trees hanging on to their leaves still? It's December. They need to get with the program. [There's a name for this phenomenon](#).

This week's birthdays:

12/20: Motown singer [Kim Weston](#) (85)

12/21: Actor/producer [Samuel L. Jackson](#) (76)

12/22: Mets pitcher [Jerry Koosman](#) (83)

12/23: Actor/voice artist [Harry Shearer](#) (81)

12/24: Actor/producer [Anil Kapoor](#) (68)

12/25: Singer/songwriter [Annie Lennox](#) (70)

12/26: Baseball Hall of Famer [Ozzie Smith](#) (70)

The Bad Joke(s) of the Week (holiday-themed):

What's the most popular holiday wine?

“I don't like Brussels sprouts!”

I got my spouse a wooden leg for the holidays. It's not the main gift, just a stocking-filler.

Why were Santa's helpers bummed out?

Low elf-esteem.

What did the snowman say to the aggressive carrot?

“Get out of my face.”

Which reindeer was most obnoxious?

Rude-olph.