

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

AGING NEWS

For the week of February 10th

Every year, in the Summer issue of our quarterly THRIVE60+ newsletter, we honor Dutchess County's centenarians and couples married 70 years or more.

And it's getting crowded at the top. The number of centenarians and ultra-long-term married couples keeps growing. It's a trend we really like to see, and a testimony to all the things our older adults are doing to maximize their chances of long, happy, independent lives.

So What's Their Big Secret?

We ask this question of as many of our oldest adults as we can find. They've given us some diverse and intriguing answers as to how they've been able to stick around for so long, and how we might follow if we did this same. They've sworn by good nutrition, strong faith, 9 golden raisins soaked in gin, regular exercise, a sense of purpose...wait, can we go back to that third one, the one with the raisins?

It's a common European folk remedy, where the raisins are soaked, sometimes for weeks, in whatever the popular local spirit may be. There's no science that we're aware of to support the longevity claims, but we weren't about to get into an argument with a 107-year-old. As always, it's best to consult with a healthcare provider before attempting to treat yourself with any therapy that has not been prescribed for you.

We've been in touch with centenarians' families, some for several years. When their centenarian family member passes away, they've often said something we never expected: *we were surprised*. How can that be?

The answer lies in a phenomenon that may be even more impressive than their long lives: how so many of them remained physically and mentally active, in many cases until the day they died. They were not only extending their lifespan; they extended their "healthspan," the amount of time living in good health, free from chronic disease and disabilities associated with aging. And so, their next of kin tell us things like "He just mowed the lawn three days ago" and "She came in from the garden, sat down in her favorite chair, and passed away."

OFA is again looking for Dutchess County centenarians or 70+ year married couples. We honored 36 centenarians in 2024; and if current trends continue, we may honor 40 or more this year. If these unique examples of successful aging turn 100 or more, or celebrate their milestone anniversary at any point this year, we'd love to know about it and honor them in the Summer 2025 THRIVE60+ newsletter. Reach out to OFA at **845-486-2555** or **ofa@dutchessny.gov** to let us know.

LUNAR/CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE

Join us for the “Red Envelope” workshop with Amy Wu celebrating the Chinese New Year, at the East Fishkill OFA Friendship Center (890 NY 82, Hopewell Junction) on Tuesday, February 18th at 10:30am.

In this workshop you will make your own “hong bao” (lucky red envelope) and learn more about Chinese culture. Enjoy some typical treats while you practice writing using Chinese characters. Amy will also be sharing some of her favorite memories of Chinese New Year!

Event is free with registration, to all Dutchess County older adults, while space is available. Call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555 to register.

SAVE THE DATE – CAREGIVER CONFERENCE

(WEDNESDAY, MAY 7TH, HYDE PARK)

Caregivers looking for help on being the best caregiver they can be while maintaining their own well-being will want to set aside Wednesday, May 7th for the annual “Caregiver Conference.” It’ll be held at the Wallace Center, on the grounds of the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park.

Registration is expected to get underway in the springtime; watch this newsletter for the specific date of registration opening – space will be limited!

The event begins with sign-in at 8:30 a.m. and continues until 2 p.m. There will be plenty of time for your questions and concerns, and dozens of experts and vendors will be on hand with answers and solutions.

The conference is organized by the Office for the Aging, the Alzheimer’s Association Hudson Valley Chapter; Hudson Valley Hospice; Parkinson’s Disease Support Group of the Mid-Hudson Valley; and community members Cathy Regan and FaLisia Cotten-Swain.

FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS – A REMINDER

Dutchess County Government offices, including the Office for the Aging and all OFA Friendship Centers, are closed on Wednesday, February 12th in observance

of the Lincoln's Birthday holiday, which is observed as a legal holiday in New York State and seven other states. Another closure is scheduled for Monday, February 17th, the national Presidents Day holiday.

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program receive shelf-stable meals in advance of legal holidays, as well as anticipated inclement winter weather.

**“SENIOR PARK PRINTS” RETURNS FOR OLDER ADULTS IN DUTCHESS
(FILLING UP FAST!)**

The annual Senior Park Prints series art class for beginners age 60 and up is about to get underway, co-hosted by the Office for the Aging and Dutchess County Parks. If you're a Dutchess County older adult (60+) who's looking to develop a new skill, register and join us at one of the following free classes:

- **Tuesday, February 11th - 10:45 am** - Red Hook OFA Friendship Center, 59 Fisk St., Red Hook – 4 SPOTS LEFT AS OF FRIDAY 2/7
- **Tuesday, March 18th - 2:00 pm** - Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie
- **Tuesday, April 8th - 2:00 pm** – Millerton-Northeast Library Annex, 28 Century Blvd., Millerton

- **(AT CAPACITY) Thursday, April 17th - 2:00 pm** - East Fishkill Community Center, 890 Route 82, Hopewell Junction

Space is limited to 12 registered older adults per event, one class per registrant. Call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555 to register.

All art supplies will be provided, and each artist can take home their new masterpiece after class.

LOW/MODERATE INCOME TAX PREP

FREE tax preparation once again is available, from AARP Foundation TaxAide's IRS trained and certified volunteers, through the Hudson Valley CA\$H Coalition.

Last year, 6,418 residents of Dutchess, Orange, and Putnam Counties received help preparing and filing their taxes, with a goal of helping 8,000 residents file returns this tax season.

The tax service is open for low to moderate income residents of all ages who meet the eligibility guidelines. Membership in AARP is not required. This free tax preparation service is provided to all those who are eligible thanks to AARP Foundation Tax-Aide and Hudson Valley CA\$H Coalition members including the Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County.

There are 15 tax sites located throughout Dutchess County with many day, evening, and Saturday appointments available.

To receive help, dial 2-1-1 to schedule an appointment through United Way's Hudson Valley Region 2-1-1 Helpline; or call 1-800-899-1479.

2-1-1 is available to take appointment calls from 9am to 4pm Monday through Friday.

Other news:

[Three ways to slow biological aging.](#)

[The bacteria in your mouth](#) are linked to changes associated with aging. No, this doesn't get you out of brushing and flossing.

Things to know about Medicare [if you're planning to travel or live overseas.](#)

Virginia Halas McCaskey was one of the first women to be principal owner of a National Football League team, inheriting the team in 1983 until [her death this past week at age 102](#). She holds the record as longest-tenured owner in NFL history and was the oldest team owner in all professional sports.

This week's birthdays:

2/7: Journalist/author [Gay Talese](#) (93)

2/8: Journalist [Ted Koppel](#) (85)

2/9: Singer/songwriter [Carole King](#) (83)

2/10: Opera legend [Leontyne Price](#) (98)

2/11: Actress/singer [Tina Louise](#) (91)

2/12: Guitarist/songwriter [Steve Hackett](#) (75)

2/13: Actress [Kim Novak](#) (92)

And the Bad Joke once again.

The sea cucumber turns to the octopus and sea urchin and says: "With friends like these, who needs anemones?"