

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of January 15th

Note: the Office for the Aging and all OFA Friendship Centers are closed for the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday on Monday, January 15th. Clients of the OFA Home Delivered Meals program receive meals in advance of the holiday.

SAFE WINTER WALKING, PENGUIN STYLE

(Article not to be read while walking in icy conditions!)

When snow and ice arrive, even the smoothest sidewalk can become a treacherous path for walkers of all ages. It's a particular challenge for older adults, who are most prone to injuries from falls.

Staying indoors until springtime isn't a practical fall prevention option, although some shopping trips can be avoided with the help of online merchants and friendly caregivers who might be able to make a trip to the shop on your behalf.

Wait just a minute here, Todd. I didn't get to be 88 years old by being scared of everything.

Duly noted. So what's an independent-minded older adult to do to avoid taking a spill when they want to go for a walk in that bracing winter air?

Let's turn to the world's undisputed expert in safely navigating slippery surfaces: the penguin. Even though they spend much of their lives walking on ice, we rarely see a penguin tumble. How do they do it, and what can we humans learn?

Starting from the safety of home, pick out the right footwear. Go with shoes or boots with large treads for better traction and consider wearing ice cleats or grippers. Put your phone in your pocket and leave it there while you're walking. Put on some warm gloves because you'll need your hands to help maintain balance. Outside your home, put down some rock salt or calcium chloride on walking areas that get slippery, especially between the front door of your home and the front door of your car.

If you've got a buddy to walk with, bring them for safety in numbers.

With advance preparations complete, it's time to summon our inner penguin and walk.

- Bend slightly forward; walk flat-footed, keeping your center of gravity over your feet;
- Point your toes out slightly to the sides, with your feet slightly wider apart than usual;
- Take short steps and shuffle or waddle. This may look silly, but when it's silly and it works, it's not silly;
- Keep your arms at your sides and hands out of your pockets; and
- Walk no faster than what you feel is safe.

If you've driven somewhere and there's ice on the ground at your destination, don't be in a hurry to get out of your vehicle. Swing both feet out of your car, together if possible. Place your feet firmly on the ground. Hold on to your car if you think you need the support and stand up...slowly.

PLANNING FOR WINTER WALKS YET TO COME

With good planning, you can avoid many falls and be less likely to be taken by surprise when a fall does happen. Sign up for an "A Matter of Balance" class with OFA and you'll learn to view the prospect of falls in a different light. For more information about "A Matter of Balance" and other exercise options, visit

dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise or call 845-486-2555.

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

HOME DELIVERED MEALS VOLUNTEER DRIVERS WANTED (EAST FISHKILL AREA)

OFA's East Fishkill Friendship Center is seeking volunteer drivers who can bring meals to Home Delivered Meals clients in the East Fishkill / Hopewell / Wappinger / Beekman area. If you are available to volunteer during middays on any weekdays, please email jdennis@dutchessny.gov or call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555.

FREE COVID TEST KITS VIA COVID.GOV

If you've been looking for COVID test kits, the federal government has again made a limited supply of free test to all households, via www.covid.gov. You'll be directed to a U.S. Postal Service website for ordering test kits.

No one will call, text, or email you from the federal government to ask for your information to “help” you order free kits. Don’t give out your credit card, bank account, or Social Security number. Do not respond. Instead, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/identitytheft/report-fraud).

SENIOR PARK PRINTS ARTS SERIES – STILL SOME SPOTS LEFT!

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 Senior Park Prints art classes, co-hosted by OFA and Dutchess County Parks:

- **Thursday, January 18th - 2:30-3:45pm** - Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie
- **Thursday, February 1st - 2:30-3:45pm** - Millerton Northeast Millerton Library Annex, 28 Century Blvd., Millerton
- **(ONE SPOT LEFT AS OF 11am JANUARY 12th!) Thursday, February 15th - 2:30-3:45pm** - East Fishkill Community Center, 890 Route 82, Hopewell Junction

Space is limited to 12 registered older adults per event. 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.

AARP FOUNDATION TAX-AIDE STARTS TAKING APPOINTMENTS (WED 1/17)

AARP Foundation and the CA\$H Coalition are about to begin another season of free tax preparation for low- and moderate-income taxpayers, families and individuals.

The service begins taking appointments after January 17th. Appointments can be made by calling 2-1-1, or 800-899-1479.

No age restrictions, and AARP membership is not required.

371 POUNDS OF UNNEEDED MEDICATIONS COLLECTED AT 2023 PICNICS

The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board reports that 371 pounds of outdated and unneeded medications were collected for safe disposal during the 2023 OFA Summer Picnic season. That's medication that did not get into our groundwater, was not ingested by mistake, and could not be stolen by individuals with addictions.

Medication drop-offs are available at every OFA Summer Picnic, as well as at 12 law enforcement headquarters throughout Dutchess County. Most (but not all) are open 24/7; you can find a printable list of drop-off points at www.dutchessny.gov/aging.

“FRIENDLY CALLS” ORIENTATIONS THIS MONTH

Interested in becoming a volunteer for OFA’s Friendly Calls program? We have orientations scheduled throughout January at OFA headquarters (114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie). Pick one:

Tuesday, January 16th – 10:00 am

Thursday, January 18th – 1:30 pm

Monday, January 22nd – 3:00 pm

To schedule your orientation and learn more about Friendly Calls, call OFA at 845-486-2555 during business hours or email bjones@dutchessny.gov.

More orientations will be scheduled, so check for updates at www.dutchessny.gov/calendar.

Other news:

[Good and bad eyesight habits.](#)

[What can we learn from centenarians?](#)

This one goes deep into the science, but [researchers report discovering five variants of Alzheimer's](#). If there are any neurology whizzes out there who can explain the science back to us in plain English, we'd be delighted.

Pimples? At my age? [It can happen.](#)

This week's birthdays:

1/13: Actress/comedian [Julia Louis-Dreyfus](#) (63)

1/14: Drag racing legend [Don Garlits](#) (92)

1/15: Guitarist/actress [Charo](#) (73)

1/16: Journalist/author [William Kennedy](#) (96)

1/17: Actor and Dutchess County resident [James Earl Jones](#) (93)

1/18: Actor/director [Kevin Costner](#) (69)

1/19: Chef/author [Paula Deen](#) (77)

Here's your weekly Bad Joke to make winter go by a bit more quickly. Or slowly.

Where do pirates get their hooks? Secondhand stores.