

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of January 19th

Note: OFA offices and Friendship Centers are closed on Monday, January 19th, in observance of the national Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Not that we're counting, but pitchers and catchers report for the Mets and Yankees in about three weeks down in Florida. The first daffodils should bloom about a month after that.

What else can sustain us through the winter?

Follow the Sun

Natural sunlight remains an effective remedy for the winter blues, even if we don't get much of it in January. Sunlight helps the body maintain a consistent circadian rhythm. Your skin produces Vitamin D when exposed to the sun's

rays, although less effectively as we age. A UCLA Health study found that 23 minutes of noontime sun exposure at our latitude would produce enough Vitamin D. If you can't get outside, even opening the curtains to sit by a window can help.

Keep Moving

Exercise is important at any time; but it can be a vital pick-me-up during the winter. OFA offers exercise and tai-chi classes, plus a remote "Staying Active and Independent for Life" class. Contact OFA to find out more.

Eat Right

Eating a balanced diet is essential for older adults and is a natural way to boost your mood and energy. Provide your body with the right combination of proteins, carbohydrates, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. Avoid the temptation to eat unhealthy snacks, and instead, snack on complex carbohydrates and super foods such as blueberries and Greek yogurt. Visit **dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition** for tips.

Leave Hibernation to the Bears

It can be tempting to wait out the winter by avoiding socialization and activities and just retreating into a cave (so to speak) until springtime; but keep up your routine as best you can. Being around other people, or talking to them on the phone, can lift your spirits. OFA's "Friendly Calls" program is a great way to stay connected, for both participants and volunteers. For more information, visit **dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls** or call **845-486-2548**.

Find Things to Look Forward To

Invite grandkids or a friend over to visit, or plan an outing with a loved one.

Adapt To New Technology

It's tough not being able to see the people you care about, but virtual communication platforms (for example, Skype, Zoom or FaceTime) can at

least let you see loved ones' faces as you talk with them. If you struggle with technology at first, there are plenty of ways to get caught up.

Do What They Do Way Up North: Stay Positive

Think there's not enough daylight around Dutchess County in the winter? Let's get some perspective from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare in Helsinki, where the sun comes up at just after 9 in the morning this week and sets about six hours later. 3:15 pm and it's dark over there; and that's *southern* Finland.

Limited daylight throws off our internal body clocks, says Institute research professor Timo Partonen. We sleep, maybe even more than usual, but we don't wake up refreshed. Dr. Partonen suggests trying a daylight simulator, also known as a sunrise alarm clock, to be eased awake and more likely to be refreshed through the day.

Other strategies adopted by residents of northern regions include maintaining a positive outlook. That means embracing the winter rather than dreading it.

At the University of Tromsø in northern Norway, associate psychology professor Ida Solhaug notes that there are low rates of seasonal depression in her part of Norway, even though the region goes without any sun at all for two months. Spending time outdoors in winter weather doesn't faze them, at any age, because they prepare for it.

"No such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing" is the Nordic saying.

But Bring a Buddy If You're Going Out

Preparedness is essential for winter outdoor activities of any kind, whether it's a nature hike or a walk across a grocery store parking lot. If you can bring a companion with you, do it.

Make sure steps, parking lots and walkways are clear before you walk, especially if you see pavement that looks wet but could be iced over. Stock up on ice melter before forecasts call for bad weather.

Wear boots with non-skid soles. If you use a cane, remember that its business end needs to be non-skid as well. The tip of your cane can wear out just like shoes and tires do. Get yourself a replacement cane tip. For winter use, there are even ice gripper cane tips that can adapt to both frozen and regular surfaces.

Let somebody know where you're going, and when you think you'll return home. If you have a mobile device, set it up to share your location with loved ones if you haven't already done so.

Some ailments can affect body heat, including diabetes and thyroid conditions. Arthritis and Parkinson's disease can make it challenging to put on more clothes for the cold.

Layer up. The air between layers of clothing helps keep you warm. Change out of damp clothes as soon as possible.

“SENIOR PARK PALETTE” RETURNS

OFA and Dutchess County Parks are presenting the 2026 series of “Senior Park Palette” classes for Dutchess County older adults (age 60+). Dutchess County residents over 60 can sign up for one of the following free classes:

Tuesday, February 10th, 2:30-3:45 pm – Poughkeepsie Friendship Center,
114 Delafield St.

Tuesday, February 17th, 2:30-3:45 pm – Millerton Friendship Center, 28
Century Blvd. (Library Annex)

Wednesday, February 18th, 2:30-3:45 pm – Red Hook Friendship Center, 59
Fisk St. (Red Hook Community Center)

Tuesday, March 24th, 2:30-3:45 pm – East Fishkill Friendship Center, 890 NY
82, Hopewell Junction (East Fishkill Community Center)

All supplies are provided. Class size is limited to 12.

Please sign up by contacting OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555.

We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail, email or text message.

“STAR” TAX EVENT AT BOARDMAN ROAD LIBRARY (Thu 1/22, noon-3)

Have you received mail from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance in the past month? The letter may have requested something called “Form RP-5300-WSC” – in other words, a request for documentation of your income, as part of qualifications for New York State’s STAR tax savings program.

The letters went specifically to homeowners who were not required to file 2024 New York State income tax returns. If you *did* file a 2024 state tax return, the state already has your information, and no further action is required on your part. Still, if you have other questions about STAR, you’ll want to know about this upcoming event.

State tax department employees will be on hand to help individuals submit income information, and to answer other questions about the STAR program, on **Thursday, January 22nd, from 12 noon to 3 pm, at Boardman Road Branch Library** (141 Boardman Rd., Poughkeepsie).

Walk-ins are welcome. For additional information on STAR, visit tax.ny.gov/star or call 518-457-2036.

SIGN UP FOR MARCH 10TH ALZHEIMER'S MINI CONFERENCE (Wed 3/18)

Join the Alzheimer's Association, the Office for the Aging, Sun River Health and community partners for a mini-conference and listening session on Alzheimer's disease, dementia and memory loss:

Wednesday, March 18th, 9:30-11:30am

Millerton-NorthEast Library Annex (OFA Friendship Center)

28 Century Blvd., Millerton

It's essential learning for older adults and caregivers of all ages. Sign up by calling OFA at 845-486-2555 or emailing ofa@dutchessny.gov.

Light refreshments will be provided. The event is supported in part by grants from the New York State Department of Health.

SUBSTITUTE OFA FRIENDSHIP CENTER MANAGERS WANTED

The Office for the Aging is looking for candidates for Substitute Site Manager positions at our eight OFA Friendship Centers.

Friendship Centers are in Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Hopewell Junction, Millerton, Pawling, Pleasant Valley, Red Hook, and Wassaic (South Amenia).

Whether an applicant can help at only certain sites or all eight, we'd like to hear from them.

A typical day for a substitute site manager covers any weekday, from 8:30am-2:30 pm, and includes coordinating with OFA's nutrition coordinator, senior site manager, friendship center staff and volunteers. A background check is required.

Interested? Send an email, with an attached résumé, if possible, to ofa@dutchessny.com; or contact Janet Nuccilli at OFA, during business hours at 845-486-2555.

For more information on OFA's Home Delivered Meals and Friendship Center services, visit www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition.

Other news:

A new American Cancer Society report indicates that [more Americans are surviving cancer](#).

Thinking of looking for work, either full time or as a side pursuit? Here's

[AARP's list of what's likely to be in demand in 2026.](#)

This past week at the US Senate, the Special Committee on Aging heard

testimony on [international scams that prey on older adults...](#)

...and a New York Times reporter [got a look inside a scam center in Myanmar](#)

(formerly Burma), in southeast Asia.

Need a conversation starter? [This is what baby aardvarks look like.](#)

This week's birthdays:

1/16: Journalist/author [William Kennedy](#) (98)

1/24: Singer-songwriter [Neil Diamond](#) (85)

1/25: Pro wrestler [The Honky Tonk Man](#) (real name Roy Wayne Farris) (73)

1/26: Actor [David Strathairn](#) (77)

1/27: Actor/director/presenter [Alan Cumming](#) (61)

1/28: Actor/director/writer [Alan Alda](#) (90)

1/29: Actor/businessman [Tom Selleck](#) (81)

Of course, a Bad Joke to wrap things up:

What do you call a fish wearing a bow tie?

Sofishticated.