

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of July 29th

TO BEAT A SCAMMER, THINK LIKE A SCAMMER

When it comes to protecting ourselves against scammers, we don't get to rest for long before it's time to update our scam-defense playbook once again.

Before we get into reminders of how to protect yourself, try to walk in the shoes of a scammer. Imagine that stealing from people halfway around the world is just another job – only worse. The people we hear on our end of an attempted phone scam are often themselves victims of human trafficking, forced to work in scam-call centers.

A skillful scammer's job is to go undetected, and thus unreported to law enforcement. For as long as they're undetected, their scams can continue.

The Federal Trade Commission reports that Americans lost \$10 billion to scammers in 2023, up from \$9 billion the year before. The FTC also reports that only 5% of fraud losses are reported, which makes the true amount lost to

scammers last year closer to \$200 billion.

And that amount is *also* a lowball figure because it doesn't include losses from fraud targeting Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance.

SCAMMERS GET SOPHISTICATED, USING AI

The most successful criminal operations are becoming more sophisticated. As security measures improve, scammers devise new ways to evade the security measures. We've heard from many near victims of phone scams lately, reporting scam attempts that appear far more realistic than the broken English and poor grammar we tend to think of in a phone scam. Instead, these scammers are using artificial intelligence (AI) to generate scam calls that sound remarkably like the kind of fraud warnings you might get from your financial institution. Still, the scammers' goal is the same: to trigger your emotional reaction with false urgency.

STAY COOL

The voice on the phone may claim to know your name, age, address, employer, Social Security number, kids' names, hair color, or favorite brand of

breakfast cereal. They can find all that, through means both legal and otherwise. Remember that they're trying to mess with you, and don't be manipulated into parting with money or personal information. Stay cool.

Your financial institution can help. When they call to warn about suspicious activity in your account, they're aware you might think their warning call is itself a scam. You won't hurt anybody's feelings if you hang up, then call them back after double-checking that you're calling the institution's confirmed phone number. It's what you're supposed to do to stay safe. On the other hand, if the caller tries to keep you on the line or wants you to call the bogus number they're feeding you, that's even more reason to be suspicious and hang up.

SHOULD I REPORT THE SCAM ATTEMPT?

Absolutely. You noticed a crime in progress. The scammer is no longer undetected. For a moment, the good guys have the upper hand – if you act. Investigators connect your information with that of thousands of other scam reports, which helps them build a case against the perpetrators.

dutchessny.gov/scamprevention has a handy list of scam prevention resources. It's printable, for you to share with offline friends.

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 Social media:

www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA

PLEASANT VALLEY NEXT ON THE OFA SUMMER PICNIC SCHEDULE

The Office for the Aging welcomes OFA Summer Picnic volunteers, without whose help events like the picnics would be far more difficult to execute.

Join us to help at picnic sites setting up and breaking down picnic tables and chairs, and bringing food and drinks to picnic guests with mobility challenges.

It's a great way to help our older adults while getting plenty of outdoor exercise. If that sounds like something you're up for, and you're available during any of the hours of roughly 10 am – 2 pm on Wednesdays, email OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones at bjones@dutchessny.gov.

This coming week, on Wednesday the 31st, the picnic schedule brings us to West Road School in the Town of Pleasant Valley. After that there's one week off

(the hottest week of the year according to historical records), and we're back at it for the last three picnics in August:

Wednesday 8/14 – City of Poughkeepsie picnic at Stitzel Field

Wednesday 8/21 – East Fishkill picnic at Hopewell Rec Park

Wednesday 8/28 – Beekman/LaGrange picnic at Freedom Park, LaGrange

Many thanks to The Pines at Poughkeepsie, AccentCare, and Central Hudson for their support of the picnic program.

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, 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, July 30th – 10:00 am

Monday, August 5th – 3:00 pm

Tuesday, August 13th – 10:00 am

Monday, August 19th – 3:00 pm

For details, contact OFA Friendly Calls Outreach Coordinator Linda Edgar at ledgar@dutchessny.gov or call OFA at 845-486-2555.

UPCOMING OFA EVENTS - SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, September 21st – 9:30 am - 12:30 pm - Annual Golden Gathering

(FREE, registration not required)

Arlington High School, 1157 NY 55, LaGrangeville

Hosted by the Office for the Aging with County Executive Sue Serino and State Senator Rob Rolison. A one-stop shop for aging resources for older adults and caregivers throughout Dutchess County and the 39th New York State Senate district.

Monday, October 21st – 12 noon - 4 pm – OFA Senior Prom

Villa Borghese, 70 Widmer Rd., Wappinger

This year's theme is "Hooray for Hollywood," where you can, if you'd like, dress as your favorite movie character or movie star. Registration opens in late August/early September. Details coming soon!

ALSO COMING SOON...ANOTHER “INTRO TO PICKLEBALL” CLASS

No class dates to announce yet, but those are coming within a few weeks. Classes will be taking place in September and/or October.

“Introduction to Pickleball” classes are typically held once a week for two hours each week, in conjunction with Dutchess County Parks.

Parks’ courts are at Quiet Cove Park in the Town of Poughkeepsie. For a look at play calendars, visit www.playtimescheduler.com.

“REBUILDING TOGETHER” APPLICATION SEASON – NOW THROUGH 9/30

Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley (www.rthudsonvalley.org, 845-454-7310) is accepting applications for the upcoming Rebuilding Day critical home repair and accessibility modification program, provided at no cost to qualified homeowners in Dutchess or Ulster County.

Visit the Rebuilding Together website or call RTHV for more information, email info@rthudsonvalley.org, or stop by their table this summer at any OFA Picnic you’re attending. (www.dutchessny.gov/ofapicnics for the picnic info)

Other news:

[The best nutrients for aging bones](#), and what foods contain them – but adding exercise to the mix is key. See dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise for a look at the options.

Here's a perspective on the growth in our aging population and the shortage of trained people to work with older adults, from somebody with a front-row seat: [an aging geriatrician](#).

[The world's oldest school bus driver](#) is 94.

One of the fathers of American judo, [Yoshihiro Uchida](#), has passed away at age 104.

[A farewell to Abdul “Duke” Fakir](#), who had been the last surviving original member of the Four Tops. He passed away earlier this week at age 88, after a seven-decade musical career.

The oldest living American [just turned 115](#).

This week’s birthdays:

7/26: Singer/songwriter Mick Jagger (81)

...[and resting up after the latest Rolling Stones tour wrapped up last week](#)

7/27: Figure skater/sportscaster [Peggy Fleming](#) (76)

7/28: Basketball Hall-of-Famer/former U.S. Senator [Bill Bradley](#) (81)

7/29: Canadian musician [Geddy Lee](#) (Rush) (71)

7/30: Singer/songwriter [Paul Anka](#) (83)

7/31: Jets defensive lineman [Gerry Philbin](#) (83)

8/1: Blues musician [Robert Cray](#) (71)

And a Bad Joke!

The shovel was a groundbreaking invention.