

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of June 29th

Note: the Office for the Aging, OFA Friendship Centers and Dutchess County Government offices are closed on Friday, July 3rd, in observance of Independence Day (Saturday, July 4th).

New SNAP/EBT Technology Coming...but Not Yet

We've harped for years on the issue of improving security for the magnetic-stripe cards used in New York State for benefits programs like SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) and other programs that use electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards.

"Chip and PIN" technology on credit and debit cards has been minimum basic security for such cards, for over a decade - but not on SNAP/EBT cards in New

York. That has made it all too easy for thieves and scammers around the world to steal benefits from food-insecure New Yorkers. Among those vulnerable to SNAP theft are over 3,700 Dutchess County residents age 65 and up, according to the most recent numbers from the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

If you think we at OFA are frustrated, imagine what goes through the mind of a SNAP recipient on the first of the month - when they find out that their newly replenished monthly benefit has already been stolen by scammers.

Less Secure Than A Hotel Room Keycard

That's what a current New York SNAP/EBT card amounts to: magnetic stripe technology largely unchanged since hotel room keycards came on the market over 40 years ago. It doesn't take a criminal mastermind to exploit the weaknesses.

Light at the End of the Tunnel?

The recently passed New York State budget for fiscal year 2027 includes a measure requiring OTDA to update all SNAP/EBT cards, starting on January 1st, 2027. The transition is supposed to be completed by the end of 2027.

That's promising news, if all goes according to plan; in the meantime, the old cards are still in effect - and still vulnerable.

How To Protect Your SNAP/EBT Benefits

Visit dutchessny.gov/ofaprintable for instructions in English and Spanish on how to "freeze" an EBT/SNAP card so that it can only be used by the true recipient, only at the time a purchase is being made. Also available are instructions on protecting a card from the skimmer technology that thieves use to steal benefits.

Maybe by this time next year, we won't have to worry about this particular scam. But scammers are relentlessly adaptable when it comes to crime. Whatever methods they come up with next, OFA will help you prepare for them.

The Best Scam Defense Is Human Connection

Stopping scams requires all of us to use every tool in our toolbox of ideas. Technological solutions can be tremendously effective in blocking scammers from reaching us in the first place, but sheer force of numbers means that a few scammers will always get through, the way we still get mosquito bites no matter how thoroughly we thought we bug-sprayed ourselves.

How could they fall for that obvious scam? is not the question to ask. *You* could fall for that obvious scam, too. We are all capable of hearing only what we want to hear, disregarding the red flags. It's what scammers count on, and why they seek out and exploit socially isolated people.

We can thwart scammers by filling the gaps in human connection that lead to this isolation. Every moment of human connection is one less opportunity for a scammer.

Help Our Older Adults Get Ready for The Coming Heat Wave

The forecast (as of when this Aging News was emailed) calls for high temperatures in the 90s starting on Wednesday, July 1st, and sticking around into at least the start of the long Independence Day weekend.

For qualifying Dutchess County older adults and medically vulnerable residents without air conditioning, there's an immediate opportunity (while supplies last) for a free residential air conditioner. [For details, visit this link from the county executive's office](#), or call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555.

“SilverShield” Scam Prevention Events With OFA

OFA is hosting at least two more “Introduction to SilverShield” scam prevention technology sessions in upcoming weeks. Seating is limited, and advance registration is required by calling the OFA at 845-486-2555 during business hours.

Monday, June 29th, 2 p.m. (STILL SEATS LEFT)

The Pavilion at Brookmeade

34 Brookmeade Dr., Rhinebeck

Monday, July 13th, 2 p.m. (AT CAPACITY)

Fishkill Recreation Center

793 NY 52, Fishkill

OFA Mobile Office Hours for Summer

Here’s the summertime list of OFA Ambassador Mary Reedy’s mobile office hours...thus far.

To book your half-hour time slot to get your aging services questions answered, call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555:

Tuesday, June 30th, 10am-noon – Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Ln.,
Millbrook

Tuesday, July 28th, 1-3pm – Millbrook Library

Thursday, August 27th, noon-3pm – Amenia Library

Your local civic organizations or governments can arrange Mobile Office Hours for your home community by contacting OFA at 845-486-2555 during business hours or emailing ofa@dutchessny.gov.

OFA Picnic “Bye” Week

After five OFA Summer Picnics in five weeks, serving over 1500 Dutchess County older adults, we need a breather!

There’s no picnic this coming week; the schedule resumes on Wednesday, July 8th with the OFA Picnic for City of Beacon older adults. Beacon seniors who haven’t signed up yet can call OFA to save their seat, at 845-486-2555, during business hours. The full picnic schedule, with directions to each upcoming venue and pictures from past picnics, is at www.dutchessny.gov/ofapicnics.

Thanks in advance to those guests who can car-pool to picnics. It makes parking that much easier for everybody.

Thanks also to AccentCare, Central Hudson, Westchester Medical Center Health Network and The Pines at Poughkeepsie for their support of the 2026 picnic season.

Other news:

The New York State Office for the Aging now has [its own scam prevention page](#).

Foods with both protein and fiber? [Not common, but there are a few](#).

The Indian state of Kerala is [trying to ensure no one ages alone](#).

This week's birthdays:

6/27: Designer [Vera Wang](#) (77)

6/28: Comedy legend [Mel Brooks](#) (100)

6/29: Actor [Gary Busey](#) (82)

6/30: Former Mets/Yankees outfielder [Ron Swoboda](#) (82)

7/1: Singer/songwriter [Debbie Harry](#) (Blondie) (81)

7/2: NASCAR legend [Richard Petty](#) (89)

7/3: Actor/producer [Tom Cruise](#) (64)

And a Bad Joke!

How do sea turtles communicate with each other?

Shell phones.