

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of June 30th

Note: The Office for the Aging and OFA Friendship Centers will be closed on Friday, July 4th, in observance of Independence Day.

Many of us look forward to retirement for much of our working lives; but when the big day finally passes and we see a calendar with a lot more blank space than we're used to, a new question arises: *now what?*

Older workers are redefining what it means to be retired. You may or may not want to go back to a full-time job, but at least a few hours a week would be nice. Or you've been thinking of volunteering with a worthy local organization, but don't know where to begin.

Allow us to fill one blank space on your calendar: **Thursday, July 10th, from 2 to 4 pm.** That's when dozens of organizations will gather for Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino's "Putting Your Skills Back to Work" Older Adult Skills Fair at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum on Route 9 in Hyde Park.

No registration is required for guests. Light refreshments will be available.

The "A" Word

Ageism in employment does exist; then again, the organizations taking part in "Putting Your Skills Back To Work" have signed on specifically because they're seeking the unique value of older workers and volunteers. But if it's been a while since you've been on a job hunt, you're likely to be looking at a much different landscape. While the language that was effective on your résumé 30 years ago is unlikely to help your cause today, you can capitalize on your decades of experience. Find out how on the back page.

Availability Is The Best Ability

Younger workers often come and go more frequently than employers would like. That means you've got an advantage simply by being the one who can be relied on to show up. Older workers often add stability to a work team. For a business, that can mean less turnover and its associated costs.

The Tech Gap Is Shrinking

Our older workers are the last ones to have grown up without computers and the internet, but many catch up to the digital pack with remarkable speed. If

you've ever been to an Apple store, it's no accident that they try to position older workers front-and-center, so that older customers just getting used to technology are less likely to feel overwhelmed. A recent AARP survey found that over 90% of older workers are interested in developing new professional skills, with the support of their employer.

If it can be said that anything positive came from the COVID-19 pandemic, a big increase in digital fluency among older adults from 2020-2025 would be a top candidate. With much work having been done remotely, workers of all ages needed to adapt to holding meetings via Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams. The result: Workers of all ages are more likely to be on the same page with each other, technology-wise.

Remote work has been a game-changer for workers with disabilities, according to a 2024 study from the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. A worker with a disability that might have forced them into an unwilling early retirement in days gone by can now stay employed and economically productive for longer. It reduces the pressure on government programs like Social Security Disability Insurance, as well as on the worker's caregivers and family.

Is Working Later In Life Healthy? Could Be

65 might not be the new 40, but over three-quarters of Americans age 50-94 polled by the University of Michigan say that work positively affects their overall well-being, while two-thirds said work had improved their physical health as well. For our own part, we've noticed more than a few Dutchess County centenarians who attributed much of their longevity to staying active, mowing their lawns with a push mower until as old as 107.

The Value of Older Volunteers

"Putting Your Skills Back To Work" will also feature organizations who are looking for volunteers, including the Office for the Aging. Our volunteers help Dutchess County's older adults, from Pawling to Tivoli and Millerton to Beacon, and everywhere in between. OFA can work with your schedule, and help you find the options that work best for you and your skills. We provide free training.

Like staying physically active? You could become an OFA Senior Exercise or "A Matter of Balance" volunteer instructor. If a structured exercise class isn't your thing but you want to stay physically active, helping out at OFA Summer Picnics and other events is a tremendous workout.

Good with numbers? The OFA Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) is looking for volunteer counselors, especially

with Medicare Open Enrollment season getting underway in mid-October.

If a drive in the countryside appeals to you, OFA's Home Delivered Meals program always has an eye out for volunteer drivers. Gas reimbursement is available for volunteers who use their own vehicles.

OFA's "Friendly Calls" program is volunteering that you can do from home, or anywhere your phone gets a signal.

Visit dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer to learn more about all our volunteering options - and come see us at "Putting Your Skills Back To Work" at the Wallace Center in Hyde Park on July 10th!

RENOVATED POUGHKEEPSIE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE REOPENS MON 6/30

Social Security officials have announced that their newly renovated office in Poughkeepsie will reopen to the public for full in-person services on Monday, June 30th, with a new entrance at 4 Academy St., around the corner from the former entrance. In-person office hours are 9:00am to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday (closed July 4th).

The Poughkeepsie office will be closed for in-person services on Friday,

June 27th. Those who need in-person services on the 27th can use these Social Security offices:

- 85 Crystal Run Road, Suite 100, Middletown (Orange County)
- One Park Place, 3rd floor, Peekskill (Westchester County)
- 747 Warren Street, Hudson (Columbia County)

The Poughkeepsie office's toll-free phone number remains the same: 877-405-6747.

Many Social Security services are available online at www.ssa.gov and through the Social Security national toll-free number 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). Automated attendant services are available at most hours and staff are available 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

(In case you missed it)

SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM OPENS IN JULY

Starting in July, qualifying Dutchess County older adults (age 60+) have an opportunity to improve their nutrition while supporting local farms, thanks to New York's Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).

Many older Dutchess County residents may already be qualified if their household income is below 185% of US poverty guidelines. An older adult who qualifies for other means-tested assistance programs may also qualify for SFMNP.

To find out more about SFMNP qualifications, call OFA during business hours

at **845-486-2555** or email **ofa@dutchessny.gov**. Older residents of low-income housing complexes may be able to find out more about SFMNP from their residence manager.

A variety of fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, and honey may be purchased with SFMNP benefits.

How To Apply for SFMNP Benefits

SFMNP booklets will be distributed, starting in July, at the OFA main office (114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie), *only on Thursdays and Fridays from 2:30-4 pm*. Note that OFA and Friendship Centers are closed for Independence Day on Friday, July 4th.

Booklet distribution at OFA Friendship Centers is available from OFA on request. OFA Friendship Centers are in Beacon, East Fishkill, Millerton, Pawling, Pleasant Valley (Tri-Town), Poughkeepsie, Red Hook, and South Amenia/Wassaic.

Each booklet contains five checks valued at \$5.00 each. Treat the checks like cash to avoid loss or theft.

Customers redeeming SFMNP checks at participating markets will not receive cash change, so use the whole check whenever possible. SFMNP checks

cannot be exchanged for cash.

Distribution will continue throughout the 2025 growing season for as long as supplies last. SFMNP checks can be used until November 30th or a participating market closes for the season, whichever comes first. Leftover checks from 2024 or earlier years are no longer valid. New York SFMNP checks cannot be used in other states.

Other markets may join SFMNP later this summer. A regularly updated list of participating markets in Dutchess County can be found at **dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition**. For the latest county-by-county list of participating local markets, go to **agriculture.ny.gov/farmersmarkets**.

Eligible recipients must personally sign the Statement of Eligibility Form to receive SFMNP checks. Checks cannot be mailed to eligible older adults. Proxies may not pick up or sign for checks. A valid Power of Attorney (POA) may sign for and pick up SFMNP coupons for an eligible older adult.

A FAREWELL TO FISHKILL'S LOSSIE LEE (1923-2025)

With a marriage of nearly 83 years, Lossie and her husband Samuel Lee, Sr. (1921-2022) were, by OFA calculations, one of the 30 longest-married couples in American history.

Both together and separately, the Lees were honored for their extraordinarily long lives and marriage, in the annual Office for the Aging “Celebration of Aging,” for a record 15 years.

Lossie would have turned 102 on July 12th. Her [Poughkeepsie Journal obituary](#) includes information on calling hours and funeral services.

NEW TRAFFIC PATTERN NEAR MAJOR NORTHERN DUTCHESS INTERSECTION

Old Post Road Extension in the Town of Rhinebeck is only a few hundred feet long, but it’s been a key shortcut between Routes 9 and 9G since before most of us were born.

It’s still a shortcut, but as of this week it has become a one-way road from southbound 9 to northbound 9G. Drivers looking to turn from southbound 9G to northbound 9 will have to use the signal at the 9/9G intersection.

New traffic control signs have been installed.

Other news:

A new [PBS documentary on caregiving](#), narrated by Bradley Cooper. (1 hour, 53 minutes)

Do you have trouble with the heat like we had earlier this week? [That's likely your aging body being disagreeable.](#)

Here's some [tooth-loss prevention tips.](#)

How does New York State rank in terms of the ability to safely age in place? [Middle of the pack, according to this survey.](#) Utah tops the list. Florida? Dead last. Second place...North Dakota?

We are not sure about this article's math, [claiming that each cup of coffee you drink boosts healthy aging by up to 5%.](#) Does that mean we can be twice as healthy by drinking 20 cups of coffee? Is that 20 a day, 20 a week, what? Also, define "up to."

This week's birthdays:

6/27: Designer [Vera Wang](#) (76)

6/28: Comedy legend [Mel Brooks](#) (99)

6/29: Singer/guitarist [Colin Hay](#) (72)

6/30: Former Mets/Yankees outfielder [Ron Swoboda](#) (81)

7/1: Singer/songwriter [Debbie Harry](#) (Blondie) (80)

7/2: Actor/comedian/screenwriter [Larry David](#) (78)

7/3: Actor/producer [Tom Cruise](#) (63)

Summer's here and the time is right for Bad Jokes like this one:

Why don't mummies go on vacation? They're afraid to unwind.