

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of March 24

Most older adults prefer to "age in place" - to live out the rest of their days in their own homes, for as long as it's safe to do so. Part of our role at the Office for the Aging is to help older adults make that preference a reality.

Advocating For Yourself

Aging in place works well when it's the result of older people enjoying their homes and adapting them to anticipate needs that arise as they age; but there's a second type of aging in place that's less appealing. This second type happens when the older resident sees no practical alternative to their current housing situation, because of financial constraints or because housing and infrastructure policy doesn't allow it - yet. Older adults and caregivers can

drive improved policy. Strength in numbers is on the side of older adults, 80,000 of whom live in Dutchess County, plus nearly as many caregivers.

Maybe an older adult would like to sell their home and downsize into something more suitable. OFA can offer guidance; through our NY Connects unit, we keep close tabs on available housing that's suitable for older adults.

But other obstacles to successful aging in place exist for older adults. Maybe they're happy with where they live but the tax bills are unsustainable, or the neighborhood isn't walkable, or the closure of their local supermarket or doctor's office left them with a long drive to the next closest ones. Many would like to add smart home security features, but the necessary broadband internet access is not sufficient. Others envision moving into an accessory dwelling unit on a family member's property, but they don't know if local zoning allows it.

It's possible they're leaving money on the table; AARP reports that federal housing assistance reached only 36.5% of eligible households, as of 2021.

Again, contacting OFA can help older adults discover the many forms of housing and home-improvement aid for which they qualify.

Time To Ask Yourself: Where Will You Be In 2, 5, 10 Years Or More?

Keep your future in mind as you make plans for aging in place - or aging in a new place. Maybe your current home meets your needs now, but what about in 2030 or 2040? Think about whether you'll have the skills and budget to make the upgrades you'll need over the years, or whether you need to look for a newer residence where the adaptations have already been made. OFA can help this process along. We won't make up your mind for you, but we can help you get to a place where whatever you decide, you'll know you had the best available information.

A Few Quick, Free, and/or Low-Cost Steps You Can Take

- If you need to replace a doorknob, consider a lever-style knob that'll be easier to operate for arthritic hands. Under the same principle, replace cabinet knobs with pull bars.
- Get to know your neighbors. You can keep an eye out for each other in the event of trouble.
- Open up floor space with safe movement in mind. Keep only the furniture you need.
- If your home has a den on the first floor, it may make more sense as a bedroom, especially if the current bedroom is on the second floor.
- Remove area rugs, when possible, especially if the rugs slide when stepped on.
- If you're investing in grab bars, go for the kind that are bolted securely to a wall, rather than a suction-cup-style bar that can pop loose at the worst possible time.
- A raised toilet seat makes it easier to transfer on and off the toilet.

If You Can Invest In Your Home, Think Longer-Term

Remember: you're not just making the improvements you need now, but also for the rest of your life. It's easier and less expensive to include aging-friendly features during a project than after it's done.

You and your caregivers can ask us more questions in person at an OFA event near you, like this next one coming in April...

YOUR Health Fair - Saturday, April 12th

The Dutchess County Department Health will host its third annual Y.O.U.R. (Young, Old, Urban, Rural) Health Dutchess County Health Fair on Saturday, April 12th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Falcon Hall at Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie.

The Office for the Aging will join dozens of other agencies and service providers at the health fair for resources and fun activities for all ages; fire and

police safety; mental health and substance use services; a sensory friendly area; and indoor/outdoor exhibitors, raffles, giveaways and more.

Visit www.dutchessny.gov/healthfair for more information.

“EMPOWERED CAREGIVER SERIES” AT OFA THIS SPRING

Are you the caregiver of a Dutchess County resident living with dementia? The Dutchess County Office for the Aging is partnering with the Alzheimer’s Association Hudson Valley Chapter to host the “Empowered Caregiver Series” in May and June at OFA headquarters, 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie.

Each session takes place on a Tuesday at 3:00pm. Seating is limited, so reservations are required. Call the Office for the Aging to save your seat at any session(s) you can attend, at 845-486-2555 during business hours. We cannot accept reservation requests made via voice mail or email.

Topics in the program include:

- May 6 - Building foundations of caregiving

- May 13 - Supporting independence
- May 20 - Communicating effectively
- May 27 - Responding to dementia-related behaviors
- June 3 - Exploring care and support services

This free program is open to caregivers of all ages and is supported in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Health.

“PANCAKES IN THE PARK” – STILL SPACE LEFT IN RHINEBECK (April 2)

The FREE annual OFA “Pancakes in the Park” events for Dutchess County older adults (60+), co-hosted by Dutchess County Parks, are filling up fast. One of the two events is already full, but there’s still room left at the other.

There is still room – while it lasts - to sign up for the second “Pancakes” event at the Pavilion at Brookmeade, 34 Brookmeade Dr. in Rhinebeck, on Wednesday, April 2nd.

The first “Pancakes in the Park” event, at Bowdoin Park on Thursday, March 27th, is at capacity.

Both events begin at 10:30 am. Guests must be Dutchess County residents age 60+.

Call OFA at 845-486-2555 during business hours to register. We cannot accept reservations left on voice mail or by email.

Each participant gets a pancake breakfast accompanied by a splash of maple syrup tapped from Dutchess County maple trees. A limited amount of syrup will be available for purchase.

CENTRAL HUDSON OLDER ADULTS' FORUMS

(Thu 4/3 in Poughkeepsie, Tue 4/15 in Millerton)

If you're a Dutchess County older adult (60+) and Central Hudson utility customer looking to make your energy budget last, Central Hudson outreach personnel will be at the OFA Friendship Center in Poughkeepsie (114 Delafield St.) on Thursday, April 3rd at 2:30, to help older adults understand the available assistance programs, along with valuable energy usage and safety information.

Seating is limited, and required reservations can be made by calling OFA during business hours (weekdays, 9a-5p) at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept reservations made by voice mail or email.

A second Central Hudson outreach event has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 15th at 1:00pm at the NorthEast-Millerton Library Annex (28 Century Blvd.), which also serves as an OFA Friendship Center. Register for the April 15th event via the library's website, www.nemillertonlibrary.org, or call the library at 518-789-3340.

Both events are geared toward savings rather than complaints about the cost of utilities. That said, we recognize the importance of advocating for oneself in successful aging, and the importance of being able to reach the right people when raising one's concerns.

It's recommended that you speak with your utility company's customer service division first; then, after you have contacted your utility to express your concerns but are not satisfied with the result, [use this link to find out more about filing complaints](#) with the New York State Department of Public Service.

AARP SHREDDER TRUCK / POUGHKEEPSIE (May 2)

Help protect yourself and your family from identity theft, deed theft, and other scams by joining AARP New York for a free paper shredding event!

On **Friday, May 2, 2025**, AARP New York will host its annual free paper shredding event with an on-site mobile shred truck in Poughkeepsie, NY from **10:00AM ET to 12:30PM ET**. The event will be held at St John's Evangelical Lutheran, 55 Wilbur Blvd, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603. [Click here to register](#). Registration closes March 25th.

Paper only. **Please remove paper clips and metal binder clips in advance.** There is a three bag or three box limit per participant. Boxes will be emptied and returned to participants. Event ends at scheduled time or when the truck is full, whichever comes first.

Can't get to this event? Check with your local authorities and financial institutions to locate shredder truck events in your area. They're most common during tax season.

SAVE THE DATE – CAREGIVER CONFERENCE

(Wednesday, May 7th – registration begins in April)

Caregivers looking for help on being the best caregiver they can be while maintaining their own well-being will want to set aside Wednesday, May 7th for the annual “Caregiver Conference.” It’ll be held at the Wallace Center, on the grounds of the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park.

Registration is expected to get underway in the springtime; watch this newsletter for the specific date of registration opening – space will be limited!

The event begins with sign-in at 8:30 a.m. and continues until 2 p.m. There will be plenty of time for your questions and concerns, and dozens of experts and vendors will be on hand with answers and solutions.

The conference is organized by the Office for the Aging, the Alzheimer’s Association Hudson Valley Chapter; Hudson Valley Hospice; Parkinson’s Disease Support Group of the Mid-Hudson Valley; and community members Cathy Regan and FaLisia Cotten-Swain.

Other news:

Do adults need another measles shot besides whatever was administered in childhood? [You'll find some answers here.](#)

Need to get better sleep? [Don't eat too close to bedtime](#) (and other tips).

Older people may be better than young people in avoiding certain types of scams, especially if social media is involved, [according to this study.](#)

[Excessive heat can age you](#) as much as smoking does.

How much exercise to get as you age? Not too little, [but also not too much.](#)

Seasonal allergies...[at our age? It can happen.](#)

The last surviving WWII Battle of Britain pilot, [John "Paddy" Hemingway](#) of the Royal Air Force, passed away this week at age 105.

A look at life as [an aging aquarium penguin](#).

This week's birthdays:

3/20: Actor/director [Hal Linden](#) (94)

3/21: Soul singer [Russell Thompkins Jr.](#) (The Stylistics) (74)

3/22: Actor/singer/starship captain [William Shatner](#) (94)

3/23: Singer-songwriter [Chaka Khan](#) (72)

3/24: Fashion designer [Bob Mackie](#) (85)

3/25: Film critic [Gene Shalit](#) (99)

3/26: Singer/songwriter [Diana Ross](#) (81)

And here's the Bad Joke:

If there was a pill to cure procrastination, I'd take it tomorrow.