

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of March 9th

I Put My Phone in the Fridge – Is That Dementia?

Forgetfulness and "brain fog" are common signs of aging. You came home from the grocery store, put the carton of milk in the fridge...and your phone right next to it.

You drive to the hardware store; but when you arrive, you can't remember why you made the trip. *Next time, I'm making a list*, you think to yourself. It's a good idea at any age.

While these things can happen at any age, it does tend to become more common as we age. It's normal to walk into a room and forget why you're there. It's normal to forget a word or a name that's right on the tip of your

tongue. It's a frustrating feeling, but there are few lasting effects on your day-to-day life.

Oregon Health and Science University lists some of the main causes of aging-related forgetfulness, many of which can feed off each other:

Hormone changes during the transition to menopause

Other hormone changes (for example, thyroid problems)

Depression

Stress

Lack of sleep

Vitamin and mineral deficiencies (such as vitamin B12)

The better news is that treating one issue can often resolve others; for example, treating depression can often result in improved sleep and lower stress. A change in diet and exercise aimed at improving your heart health is likely to also be good for your brain.

What's the difference between brain fog as described, and early signs of dementia or Alzheimer's disease?

Dementia - The Warning Signs

Dementia refers to a group of conditions that cause memory loss and cognitive decline, worsening over time. Alzheimer's disease is far from the only type of dementia, common though it may be. Common signs of dementia include:

Forgetting names of close family members. It's one thing to forget the name of your neighbor's dog; but to forget a spouse or child's name is anything but normal forgetfulness. It indicates sufficient cause to get in touch with a medical professional for a diagnosis.

Personality changes. Older adults in the middle stages of dementia can suddenly become more prone to paranoia, impulsiveness, and aggressive behavior. If this is new behavior, it's time to contact a doctor to learn what the next steps may be.

Disorientation. Being in an unfamiliar setting can be challenging; but in an individual with dementia, these setting can induce anxiety, panic and even anger, along with confusion as to place and time.

The Questions To Ask Your Doctor

How can I tell what's what? Our brains are the biggest they'll ever be in our 40s, according to University of Utah neurologist Christine Claff Brown. After that there's gradual shrinkage. Your doctor can help you sort out what's out of the ordinary for your age.

Is an outside issue affecting my memory? Ask the doctor to check for signs of possible medication side effects, nutritional deficiencies, a thyroid issue, or a urinary tract infection (UTI), all of which can mimic dementia to at least some extent.

What kind of lifestyle changes could help? Dementia is at least somewhat preventable. Here are some factors that are within our control:

Stay physically active;

Eat a healthy diet, such as the Mediterranean diet, which includes leafy greens, whole grains, healthy fats, and low-fat animal proteins, such as fish or poultry;

Get enough sleep each night;

Limit alcohol and avoid smoking;

Manage controllable risk factors that can increase the risk of dementia, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and sleep apnea;

Wear your eyeglasses or hearing aids if you need them;

Stay social, whether that be with family members, friends, neighbors, religious organization groups, or volunteering;

Partake in a variety of activities you enjoy that also challenge you mentally, such as puzzles, reading, art, board games, or museum visits.

What's a cognitive screening all about? A visit to a neurologist might not be needed as the first option. Your physician may be able to start with having you take a short, basic cognitive screening that only lasts a few minutes. After that, brain imaging may provide some clues, such as whether there's been a previously undetected stroke.

I heard about a blood test for dementia. It's not usually the first option. The test does exist, but should be administered only to people with confirmed cognitive decline. Experts warn that the test can generate false positives in people with normal cognition, for the "tau" protein that's a key indicator that an individual has Alzheimer's.

Introducing “Silvershield” Scam Prevention

As scams get ever more sophisticated, it can become more likely that a scammer will successfully trick you into giving up money and/or personal information. We can get scam prevention help from caregivers and loved ones; but they can't always be there in the moment, when the scam attempt is happening.

We need tools that can efficiently detect scams, report them to law enforcement agencies so that investigations can proceed with the speed they require to succeed.

That's where OFA's new partnership with “Silvershield” (www.silvershield.ai) comes in. It's a way to check suspicious communications quickly and get clear guidance on what to do next.

OFA is hosting an “Introduction to Silvershield” event for Dutchess County residents over 60, on Tuesday March 24th from 2:30 to 4:30pm, at the OFA Poughkeepsie Friendship Center at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie. Bring your mobile device if you have one.

Seating is limited, so book your spot by calling OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail, email or text message.

New Day/Time For “Navigating Medicare” Classes in Rhinebeck

OFA’s monthly “Navigating Medicare” classes at Rhinebeck’s Starr Library have been rescheduled to the second Wednesday of every month at 4:00pm.

The monthly “Navigating Medicare” classes held at the Poughkeepsie Galleria community room remain on the third Wednesday of every month at 10:00am.

To sign up for any of the above classes, call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555.

We also have a “Navigating Medicare” class scheduled for Friday, April 10th at 9:30am, at Adriance Memorial Library in Poughkeepsie (93 Market St., parking on Noxon St.). To sign up for this class, call 845-485-3445 extension 3380.

“Pancakes in the Park” Returns

One sure sign of spring is when the sap in Dutchess County's maple trees starts running during the late winter and early spring. OFA and Dutchess County Parks mark the occurrence each year with our free "Pancakes in the Park" event for Dutchess County older adults.

By popular demand there are now two "Pancakes" events, both at 10:30am: one on Thursday, March 26th at the auditorium at Bowdoin Park in Wappingers Falls; another on Tuesday, April 7th at the Pavilion at Brookmeade in Rhinebeck. Each participant gets a pancake breakfast accompanied by a splash of maple syrup tapped from Bowdoin's own trees. A limited amount of syrup will be available for purchase.

Seating is limited and advance registration with OFA is required. Registration opens on Friday, March 6th; call us at 845-486-2555 during business hours to register. **Guests may register for only one event.** We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail, email, or text message.

Substitute OFA Bus Drivers Wanted

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging is seeking compassionate and responsible substitute Bus Drivers to transport older adults safely to and from OFA Friendship Centers, scheduled outings, and other destinations.

An ideal candidate will prioritize passenger safety, and create a comfortable, friendly atmosphere for our senior community.

Key Responsibilities:

- Safely operate a passenger bus or van, adhering to all traffic laws and safety regulations.
- Assist older adults with boarding and exiting vehicles, including those using walkers or wheelchairs.
- Follow scheduled pick-up and drop-off times.
- Maintain a clean and well-kept vehicle, reporting any maintenance issues as needed.
- Engage with passengers in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Monitor passengers for signs of distress or medical concerns, and respond appropriately.

Qualifications & Requirements:

- Valid New York State driver's license. Both CDL and non-CDL applicants welcomed.
- Clean driving record and background check.
- Previous experience driving older adults and/or individuals with mobility challenges is preferred.
- Ability to assist passengers with mobility aids (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.).
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Patience, reliability, and a friendly demeanor.

[Click here for a full description of requirements and qualifications.](#)

To begin the application process, call **845-486-2555** during business hours, or email jnuccilli@dutchessny.gov.

Last Chance To Sign Up For Senior Park Palette (Red Hook)

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 the remaining available free class:

- Tuesday, March 10th, 2:00-3:15 pm – Red Hook Friendship Center, 59 Fisk St. (Red Hook Community Center)

All other classes have either passed or are at capacity. Only two seats remain for this class as of when this newsletter was delivered, so make reservations ASAP by calling OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail, email or text message.

All supplies are provided. Each class size is limited to 12.

OFA March Mobile Office Hours

If you have questions about aging services that would be best served by an in-person meeting, but travel to and from Poughkeepsie is a challenge, OFA Ambassador Mary Reedy is hosting by-appointment OFA Mobile Office Hours around Dutchess County.

Appointments are 30 minutes long at each Mobile Office Hours event.
Appointments can be made by calling 845-486-2555 during business hours.

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

Here's the schedule:

Monday, March 9th, 10a-2p, South Amenia Friendship Center

229 South Amenia Rd., Wassaic

Tuesday, March 10th, 10a-2p – Pawling Friendship Center

154 Charles Colman Blvd., Pawling

Thursday, March 12th, 10a-2p – Tri-Town Friendship Center

1576 Main St. (US 44), Pleasant Valley

Monday, March 23rd – Town of Poughkeepsie Senior Center

14 Abe's Way, Poughkeepsie

Tuesday, March 31st, 10a-1p (new time) – Beekman Town Hall

4 Main St., Poughquag

If your Dutchess County civic organization wants to host a Mobile Office Hours event, email ofa@dutchessny.gov or call 845-486-2555 during

business hours. We're also available for presentations to groups on OFA Services, successful aging, scam prevention, home safety, caregiving, and much more.

Scam Prevention for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Tue 3/17)

OFA Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones will give a presentation on scam and fraud protection for members of the hearing loss community and their caregivers on Tuesday, March 17th at 5:15 pm, at the Pleasant Valley Library at 1584 Main St (US 44) in Pleasant Valley, for the Hearing Loss Association of America's Mid-Hudson chapter.

The presentation is open to the public and recommended for people with hearing loss and/or family members with hearing loss. To register, visit

hearingloss-midhudson.org, email

hearingloss.midhudson@gmail.com, or call

845-489-7008. Can't make it to the presentation, but want some close-at-hand scam prevention resources? Visit **dutchessny.gov/ofaprintable** for important strategies and contact information.

Volunteer OFA Exercise Instructors Wanted

We've been getting a lot of inquiries lately about exercise classes for older adults in Dutchess County, but have you ever thought about teaching an exercise class?

No experience is necessary. We provide all training. And our exercise classes are decidedly not a "go for the burn" type of experience.

To learn more about the classes, visit

www.dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise.

OFA at Alzheimer's Mini Conference in Millerton (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.

Get Caught Up On Vaccinations (Tue 3/24)

If you've been meaning to get caught up on necessary vaccinations and are available on Tuesday, March 24th between 10am and 2pm, OFA and Walgreens are offering a chance to get up-to-date for Dutchess County older adults (60+) at the main OFA office at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie.

Available vaccines: COVID-19, RSV, Influenza, Tetanus, Shingles, and Pneumonia

For more information and to set up an appointment, call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail, email or text message.

Have your Medicare/insurance card handy when you arrive for your appointment.

More news:

[How scammers can clone your voice.](#)

Is your phone a “junk drawer”? [Here’s some cleanup tips.](#)

[New York State’s top ten consumer complaints of 2025](#), according to the state office of the attorney general.

[15 products you may need](#) when caring for an aging loved one.

This week’s birthdays:

3/6: Singer/songwriter/guitarist [David Gilmour](#) (Pink Floyd) (80)

3/7: Comedian/actress [Wanda Sykes](#) (62)

3/8: Singer-songwriter [Micky Dolenz](#) (The Monkees) (81)

3/9: Actress [Juliette Binoche](#) (62)

3/10: Man/myth/legend/actor [Chuck Norris](#) (86)

3/11: Photographer [David LaChapelle](#) (63)

3/12: Singer/actress [Liza Minnelli](#) (80)

A Bad Joke? Not this week. Since this week marks the 86th birthday of action movie and martial arts legend Chuck Norris, we have these. The following is an assortment of Chuck Norris jokes that Chuck Norris has allowed to exist:

Chuck Norris counted to infinity – twice.

When Chuck Norris slices onions, the onions cry.

Time waits for no man except Chuck Norris.

Chuck Norris can slam a revolving door.

Chuck Norris can make a Slinky go up stairs.

Chuck Norris can make fresh squeezed orange juice – from a brick.

The Bad Jokes will be back next week, if Chuck Norris forgives them.