

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of May 12

THE CHALLENGES OF AGING SOLO

Generations ago, it was far more common for an older adult to have family and friends nearby to provide support, sometimes even in the same house.

Today, finding a family caregiver for yourself or an older adult who needs the help is *much* more of a challenge. It's why we at the Office for the Aging keep pressing the message:

*Get to know us **before** you need us.*

It's great if you're doing well living alone at 65, but you may already be aware that it's no time to rest on your laurels. Envision yourself at 75, 85, 95 or even more. Will you still be able to go it on your own?

Some of our oldest older adults have managed to do this, thanks to a mix of planning, determination, and good luck - especially the kind of good luck that results from good planning. Again, OFA can help you be as sure as possible that all your ducks are in a row.

Some Numbers and History

At the peak of the baby boom in 1960, the U.S. birth rate was 3.58 children per woman of childbearing age; for the past 25 years or so, the birth rate has stayed at about half the 1960 rate.

New York was still the nation's most populated state in 1960; today, we're fourth behind California, Texas and Florida. Dutchess County itself grew in

population by leaps and bounds for much of the mid-20th century. In recent decades, though, County population would likely have dropped if not for our older adults' extraordinary achievements in successful aging. Where older adults of days gone by used to seek greener pastures down south, more of them here in Dutchess County now say...*know what? I'm good*. It's an increasingly common mindset among solo agers here in Dutchess. We're glad to see it, but aging without a net still requires a plan.

No Scare Stories About Aging Alone

Reality is already challenging enough. More than one out of every five Americans over 65 are - or are at risk of becoming - elder orphans. 23 percent of baby boomers will eventually not have access to a family caregiver, according to Maria Carney, who has studied the issue and is chief of geriatric and palliative medicine at Northwell Health of Great Neck, N.Y. The Census Bureau reports that the number of one-person households, with millions of older adults among them, has tripled since 1940.

Like any other older person, a solo ager wants to stay as independent as possible, pursuing their interests and happiness for as long as possible.

Family might not be nearby, but friends are. Still, some kind of caregiving is needed, even for an older adult in fine health. Go in for a routine colonoscopy, for example, and you'll need to have somebody there to take you home afterwards - or the procedure will not be done.

If you're set on aging alone, setting up tasks to happen on autopilot is something to consider. Ask your bank or credit union for help setting up automatic bill-paying. Talk to an elder law attorney about making your wishes known, should you become unable to communicate later in life. OFA funds a *Legal Services for the Elderly* Program designed to provide legal assistance to Dutchess County residents age 60 and over. The program has no financial eligibility requirements; however, it is intended for those older adults who would otherwise be unable to afford legal assistance. The service is available by appointment only, Fridays only, at OFA headquarters in Poughkeepsie. Contact OFA for details.

Pre-paying your funeral expenses, when possible, will be a massive help to next-of-kin. Details are available via the Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Hudson Valley (fcahv.org).

“EMPOWERED CAREGIVER SERIES” AT OFA THIS SPRING

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging is continuing its partnership 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 Tuesdays at 3:00pm. Seating is limited, so reservations are required. You can sign up for any or all sessions. There are four sessions left on the schedule as of this week.

Call the Office for the Aging to save your seat at the 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 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.

OFA PICNIC REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Registration for the 2025 season of OFA Senior Picnics opened on May 1st; and you can save your seat at the picnic corresponding to your community by calling OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept reservation requests made by voice mail or email.

All this summer's picnics are being held on Wednesdays, with lunch starting at noon.

We also mail picnic reminder cards to over 50,000 older adults countywide. You need not receive a reminder card to make a reservation, but you do need to call OFA to make the reservation.

Picnic seating space is limited; therefore, we cannot accept walk-ins.

When's my picnic? Here's the schedule, which is also available at

www.dutchessny.gov/ofapicnics:

May 28 - Town and Village of Pawling, Towns of Dover, Amenia and Union

Vale

Boyce Park, 6420 Route 55, Wingdale

June 4 - Village and Town of Fishkill

Geering Park, Fishkill

June 11 - Towns of Milan, Red Hook and Rhinebeck and Villages of Red

Hook, Rhinebeck, and Tivoli

Dutchess County Fairgrounds, 6636 US 9, Rhinebeck

June 18 - Towns of Clinton and Hyde Park, including Staatsburg

Church of Regina Coeli (rear lot), entrance at 28 Harvey St., Hyde Park

June 25 - Town of Poughkeepsie

Bowdoin Park, 85 Sheafe Rd., Poughkeepsie

July 9 - City of Beacon

Memorial Park, 298 Fishkill Ave., Beacon

July 16 - Towns of North East, Pine Plains, Washington and Stanford, and Villages of Millbrook and Millerton

Stissing Mountain Jr./Sr. High School, 2829 Church St. (Route 199), Pine Plains

July 23 - Town of Wappinger and Village of Wappingers Falls

Recreation Park, 95 Robinson Lane, Wappinger

July 30 - Town of Pleasant Valley

West Road School, 181 West Rd., Pleasant Valley

August 13 - City of Poughkeepsie

Stitzel Field, 10-14 Lincoln Ave., Poughkeepsie

August 20 - Towns of LaGrange and Beekman

Freedom Park, 212 Skidmore Rd., LaGrange

August 27 - Town of East Fishkill

East Fishkill Recreation Park, 330 Route 376, Hopewell Junction

There is an \$8 per person fee for every non-resident guest, and for any guest age 59 or under, if space is available at the requested picnic.

Guests enjoy a nutritious lunch and can have their concerns heard by the Office for the Aging, various Dutchess County Government departments, as well as local government leaders and area nonprofit organizations. Bob Martinson will be back for another season of live music.

We strongly recommend car-pooling to picnics. It makes picnic parking considerably easier for everyone.

Many thanks to The Pines at Poughkeepsie, Central Hudson, AccentCare, and Hudson Valley Medicare Group for their support of all 12 picnics.

SUMMER OFA HOLIDAYS

Thinking about reaching out to OFA? Our offices are open weekdays from 9:00 am to 5:00, except for the following national holidays this summer:

Monday, May 26th – Memorial Day

Thursday, June 19th – Juneteenth

Friday, July 4th – Independence Day

Monday, September 1st – Labor Day

OFA Friendship Centers and Dutchess County Government offices are also closed on national holidays. Clients of the OFA Home Delivered Meals program receive shelf-stable meals in advance of each holiday.

Want to email us and don't know how to reach out? Our general email address is ofa@dutchessny.gov.

THANKS FOR COMING TO “SPRING INTO HAPPINESS”

At OFA we emphasize the importance of getting out of one's “comfort zone” to improve the chances of successful aging...so that's what we did this past Monday with our “Spring into Happiness” event at Locust Grove in Poughkeepsie.

Many thanks to OFA and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers for making this event work well, along with Locust Grove Estate, Marist University Center for Lifetime Studies, Carl Welden Productions, Trio Community Meals...and our thanks also to those of you who came out to enjoy the event.

We've always got our eyes out for new and interesting ways to keep the older adults of Dutchess County engaged with the community. Follow OFA on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA) for even more information.

In the meantime...could *you* help OFA spread some happiness? Become an OFA "Friendly Calls" volunteer and bring a bit of happiness into the life of an older adult in Dutchess County who's at risk of social isolation and loneliness. To learn more, visit www.dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls, call 845-486-2555 during business hours, or email ledger@dutchessny.gov.

Other news:

The Rite-Aid pharmacy chain plans to [close all 178 of its stores in New York State](#) by June. Their local stores include two in Poughkeepsie, one in Beacon, one in Hyde Park, and one in Wappingers Falls.

Is [the virus that causes cold sores](#) connected to Alzheimer's disease?

[What's brain health](#)? Click the link to get a breakdown of what good brain health entails.

[The hallmarks of aging](#) - and how to combat them.

[How's your grip strength](#)? It can be an important marker of health in older adults.

Got trouble with bears rummaging through your property looking for something to eat? [Some tips here](#), from the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

This week's birthdays:

5/9: Singer/songwriter/pianist [Billy Joel](#) (76)

5/10: Singer/songwriter [Donovan](#) (79)

5/11: Singer/songwriter/actor [Eric Burdon](#) (84)

5/12: Singer/songwriter/guitarist [Steve Winwood](#) (77)

5/13: Singer/songwriter/pianist/drummer/producer [Stevie Wonder](#) (75)

5/14: Baseball Hall-of-Famer [Tony Pérez](#) (83)

5/15: Painter/sculptor [Jasper Johns](#) (95)

You cannot stop the Bad Joke. You can only contain it:

What kind of car does a sheep like to drive?

Lamborghini.