Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of November 16

Win the Paperwork Battle, With Help from OFA

While the overall poverty rate has been dropping among Americans, reaching a record low in 2025, it's been steadily rising among older adults. That's according to a new survey from the AARP Foundation, which surveys low-income older adults every quarter. The survey includes adults in the 50-64 age range, many of whom haven't retired yet but are getting close.

Foundation President Claire Casey recently told National Public Radio that this group of older adults are more likely to end up as long-term unemployed, should they lose their jobs. Those who do find employment tend to find jobs that pay less than their previous jobs. The surveys also show more older adults taking second jobs.

Now, more than ever, it's important that Dutchess County's older adults be sure they claim all the assistance for which they qualify. While the older-adult poverty rate in Dutchess is lower than the national rate, at 8-11 percent, depending on what community they live in, thousands of our friends and neighbors still leave money on the table.

Two Key Reasons Why

They might not know about it. OFA connects thousands of Dutchess County older adults with assistance, but many more still need to know the help is available. Of the roughly 300,000 people who live here, about 80,000 are over age 60. Your reading this newsletter means you're savvier than most, but what about your older friends and neighbors who don't?

If you receive this newsletter via email, feel free to forward it to your friends. For those who aren't online, please print a copy for them. And if you're one

who prefers to read this column in a physical newspaper, grab the scissors and clip it out.

Back issues of OFA newsletters are available at **dutchessny.gov/agingnews** for weekly newsletters) and **dutchessny.gov/thrive60** for our quarterly newsletters.

If you're reading this in print and would like it supplemented in a weekly email, drop OFA a line at **ofa@dutchessny.gov** and we'll get you subscribed. We do not sell or share our contact lists, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Printable OFA materials are also available at **dutchessny.gov/ofaprintable**. For specific questions, just reach out to OFA. Call during business hours and you'll hear something rare: an actual local, human voice on the other end. OFA's reception staff has fielded thousands of questions over the years. If we don't handle the question directly, we point people to the agencies that do.

They "Don't Want A Handout." This isn't a handout. The median age of an OFA client is in the early 80's. This means they've been paying taxes and fees of one kind and another ever since the first time they bought something for themselves with an allowance. That's at least 70-75 years of paying taxes. If anybody has paid their way, it's our older adults. Put it this way to someone who might be hesitant about talking to OFA: A little help now to keep them living independently can prevent a much larger expenditure of taxpayer money later.

Thanksgiving Week Hours

OFA offices and Friendship Centers are closed on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 26th. Friendship Centers will also be closed on Friday, November 27th. Offices will be open on the 27th.

“Support Our Seniors” Continues

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino and the County's Office for the Aging (OFA) invite the community to help make the holiday season warmer and brighter for older adults in need by taking part in the County's second annual "Support Our Seniors" gift drive, taking place now through Dec. 15.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "Our gift drive is a simple way to show Dutchess County's older adults that their community cares about them. A warm blanket, cozy socks or slippers can brighten someone's day and remind an older neighbor that they are not forgotten. If you can help our older adults with a much-needed item or two, I hope you'll consider our 'Support Our Seniors' drive."

Donations collected through the gift drive will benefit older adults throughout Dutchess County who may face the holidays with limited resources and little opportunity to shop for themselves. A simple gift can provide both comfort and a reminder that their Dutchess County neighbors care.

The "Supporting Our Seniors" gift drive seeks donations of new, unused and unwrapped items, including:

- Non-slip socks

- Slippers
- Blankets and throws
- Knit hats and caps
- Scarves
- Gloves and mittens

Collection boxes are available at any of the OFA's eight Friendship Centers; a list of all the centers is available at www.dutchessny.gov/friendshipcenters. Call ahead to make sure gifts can be dropped off during operating hours.

County Executive Serino and the OFA encourage individuals, families, businesses, schools and community groups to participate in the gift drive and help bring a little extra joy to local older adults this winter.

As the number of older adults in Dutchess County continues to grow, community support remains an important resource for ensuring seniors remain connected and cared for, especially during the holiday season. The donated items will help provide warmth, comfort and enjoyment to local older adults.

OFA Director Todd Tancredi said, “Supporting older adults and helping them remain connected to their community is at the heart of the Office for the Aging’s mission. This drive is about more than collecting items. It is about showing our seniors that they matter.”

More information about the “Support Our Seniors” holiday gift drive is available by contacting the OFA at 845-486-2555 or ofa@dutchessny.gov.

OFA In Stanfordville (Wed 11/18)

We’re offering a presentation on the Importance of Physical Activity on Wednesday, November 18th at 2:00 pm at Stanford Free Library, 6035 NY 82 in Stanfordville. Contact the library at 845-868-1341 to register; or use the calendar feature at www.stanfordlibrary.org to register online.

Visit www.dutchessny.gov/calendar for a listing of OFA events and other Dutchess County Government events and meetings.

OFA Now Arranging Group Presentations for 2027

If you're part of a civic organization, house-of-worship organization, seniors group, caregivers group, or similar organization that meets anywhere in Dutchess County, we have a diverse array of OFA speakers available in 2027 to discuss all kinds of aging-related and caregiving issues.

We can talk to your group about OFA services, scam prevention, the importance of physical activity, our Friendly Calls program, nutrition, health insurance and lots more. We can make sometimes-complex information more understandable, accessible, and even entertaining.

Our speakers' calendar tends to fill up quickly, even in the winter. For more information, email bjones@dutchessny.gov or call 845-486-2555.

Other news:

Medicare's annual Open Enrollment season is almost over but plenty of Medicare scams are still out there.

Prostate cancer screening guidelines have changed.

Possible alternatives to assisted living: a roundup.

Using the last four digits of your Social Security number is pretty flimsy security for doing business online, but it's still commonly used even though it was never intended to be an ID number.

This week's birthdays:

11/14: Pianist/composer Yanni (72)

11/15: Singer/songwriter/actress Petula Clark (94)

11/16: Former Mets/Yankees pitcher Doc Gooden (62)

11/17: Director/producer/screenwriter Martin Scorsese (84)

11/18: Author/poet Margaret Atwood (87)

11/19: Talk show host/actor Dick Cavett (90)

11/20: Novelist Don DeLillo (90)

How about another Bad Joke? (This one's for the English teachers)

"Knock Knock"

"Who's there?"

"To"

"To Who?"

(exasperatedly) "It's to *whom"*